



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



STUORE

STUORE

BY

MICHAEL EARLS, S.J.

NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO

BENZIGER BROTHERS

PUBLISHERS OF BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE

1911

COPYRIGHT, 1911, BY BENZIGER BROTHERS

**TO THE LITTLE PARISH CHURCH AT HOME
AND TO THE PASTOR OF THOSE DEAR DAYS,
FATHER JAMES DONOHUE.**

PREFACE

IN the middle of the seventeenth century, Padre Giovanni Stefano Menochio, S.J., published some of his literary works under the title, "Stuore." It will not be accounted a plagiarism on my part, nearly three centuries later, to use the name for a book of far less worth than any by the learned Padre.

The only reason that invites the present use of this old Italian word is that these stories were done in snatches of time similar to those in which Padre Menochio wrote his literary "mats." And since I have borrowed the title, I will proceed to borrow an explanatory note concerning it. My dear friend, Father Matthew Russell, S.J., will expect me to say, as I here do, that I quote this paragraph from his (and everybody's) beloved *Irish Monthly*, and that the passage occurs in a scholarly paper from the pen of Rev. Dr. C. W. Russell:

PREFACE

“There is a learned, though rather rare, work by an Italian Jesuit, Padre Menochio, which bears the singular title of *Stuore*, or ‘*Mats*.’ This may appear a strange subject to have engaged the attention of a scholar, and therefore I must explain that the work has no connection with the homely manufacture indicated by its title; the name being a fanciful one, borrowed from an ancient usage of the monastic institute. It was a rule of the early Basilian monks that no portion of time, however minute, must be passed in idleness; and accordingly they were required to employ some of the brief intervals between the hours of prayer and of stated labor in some lighter occupation, such as the weaving of mats. Hence, by analogy, the name of Padre Menochio’s collection. He was one of the most laborious of students, and denied himself during a long life even the ordinary remissions of study permitted by the usages of his Order. The stated hours of recreation he employed in lighter literary labors, which served him as a means of relaxation from the severer studies that formed the business of his life; and the six

PREFACE

quarto volumes to which I allude contain the jotting down of his lighter hours—the literary ‘Mats’ woven by his indefatigable hands in the brief intervals which were regarded by others as scarce sufficient to satisfy the very narrowest requirements of the indispensable relaxation.”

Two grateful acknowledgments I wish to make before I end this part of the book,—namely, to Father Hudson, C.S.C., for his kind permission to reprint two of these stories from the *Ave Maria*, and to Messrs. Benziger Brothers for a similar courtesy and kindness from *Benziger's Magazine*.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	5
THE APPARITION TO ERNEST MARCY	11
FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND. . .	53
THE PLACE OF PURGATORY	89
DASEY	109
I THE BROTHERS	111
II IN A STORM AT SEA	123
III STAR OF THE SEA	131
IV THE RIGHT ADDRESS	145
THE MESSAGE OF THE BURGLAR'S LETTER	157
NORRY DONLAN, BENEFACTRESS . .	191
OLD CAPTAIN	217
I MY AUTHORITY	219
II THE OLD BOY'S COVE	231
III HIS PENANCE	246
IV HIS BLESSING	249

**THE APPARITION TO
ERNEST MARCY**

I

NARRATIVES, written under the burning sun of central Africa or in the shadow of the Great Wall of China, or again on a halted sledge in Alaska, you may have read, and in them you have probably found, besides the religious history that they meant to give, many a marvellous incident, the thrilling experiences that happened to missionary workers in their remote fields of labor. But the realm of such extraordinary happenings is not confined to the extreme borders of the world; their habitation can be Fifth Avenue or the Golden Gate as readily as the torrid or the arctic corners of Ultima Thule. The heart of man, and the influences

THE APPARITION TO

that work upon it are essentially the same the world over; just as the bark of a hound is the same in New Zealand as in New Mexico.

My short career in the priesthood had not brought me any human experience of extraordinary interest before I met Ernest Marcy. I had been ordained only a month and was stationed at the cathedral in Springfield to wait for an appointment as curate. My work there, except for its novelty to me, was uneventful. The day that I am now telling you of was the first of its kind; and while it is interesting enough of itself, it was made doubly so by the unique incident which terminated it. A dark hour towards midnight, under the cold, silent stars, in a lonely, almost uninhabited woodland, with only one companion by my side, and he an eccentric stranger, made an environment that would work on any imagination. How my little missionary expedition led to these circumstances you shall presently hear, after I tell

ERNEST MARCY

ne you succinctly the history of the day itself.

nd During the summer months, the village of
w Brimfield, like many of its neighboring ham-
lets in that secluded section of central Mas-
sachusetts, became considerably more popu-
lous by the advent of several families from
t their city homes. Old colonial mansions,
t whose spacious rooms bespoke the grand-
sires' anticipation of large families and am-
ple hospitality, were shaken out of their long
winter's sleep; the painter's brush brought
into vividness the quaint features of the
buildings in their settings of firs and lilac
bushes; lawns were cleared and made smooth,
till they looked like undulations of green
satin; and the gardener's shears trimmed the
hedges into a Versailles rectitude.

Of these summer inhabitants, a few families
were Catholic. The nearest church for their
worship was seven miles distant; and at the
earnest request of the visitors, a priest was
appointed for Brimfield during the summer
months. A Jesuit Father from the college in

THE APPARITION TO

Worcester attended to the mission at the beginning. He came on Saturday and spent the evening at his mother's house, which was in an adjacent village; then at an early hour on Sunday morning he went over to Brimfield and held the services at the most central house of the congregation,—the Hall, it was called by the townspeople, an imposing New England manor, fronting on the village Common. At his first visit the head of the Hall invited him to give a series of historical and literary lectures on Sunday evenings; musical assistance by members of the summer colony would help the entertainment; and a card would be inserted in the village paper to say that the townspeople were cordially invited to attend the lectures. A consequence of these Sunday evening entertainments was this,—that towards the end of the season, some of the natives of Brimfield who had never seen a Catholic ceremony attended the morning services at the Hall.

On the last Sunday of August the Jesuit

ERNEST MARCY

Father had to be absent, being in the solitude of his annual retreat. I was accordingly sent up from Springfield by the Bishop. I left the city at six o'clock in the morning, going to my destination by the electric railway. Along the road, which for the most part, ran through wooded valleys and by pleasant brooks, I found time to gather a few thoughts for a short sermon. A thousand things read lessons to me as I rode along; flowers that grew in strong, patient hardihood in rocky places; a smiling brook running so slowly that it scarcely moved a few fallen leaves, and yet when it was held back by a small dam, it massed its strength into a channel and sent power into a wheel at a mill where men of the place might earn their daily bread; and many sunny openings on the hillsides I saw, where the farmer might harvest a special kind of vegetable that would not thrive in the lowlands.

With these lessons in my mind, I determined to preach about "The Wayside of

THE APPARITION TO

Life." I would draw illustrations from what I had seen along the road, and I would show their parallels and similitudes in the spiritual life,—the graces that come to us along the wayside of our days and years; the shadows of sorrow that can make us patient and strong and noble, and fill our lives with a fragrance beyond the flowers of earth; the lights of various kinds that break in upon our minds, perhaps in a conversation, or in reading a book, or while witnessing a scene, whether in the rush of daily life, or in the still, thoughtful hours of the night,—lights that flood our souls, like a clear opening in the woods, and then we see the sky more easily, as if it were a spiritual vision; and again the power that is oftentimes running useless in our lives, like the shallow water of a brook, till we put some vital motive before it, and we mass its energies, and thereafter strength comes to us and usefulness and the multiplying of our five talents into five and twenty, making us rich for earth and heaven.

ERNEST MARCY

With such thoughts I filled the time till I arrived at Brimfield; I did not dream that my ride over that same road at night would make me witness to the strange story of which I am telling you.

THE APPARITION TO

II

When my car reached the Common I went directly to the house where I was to say Mass. The master of the Hall took me through the spacious corridors that led to the music room, where an altar was erected. After the services I breakfasted with the people at the Hall. Though urgently invited to remain there for the afternoon and evening, I chose another courtesy they extended me in preference,—to take their carriage for a drive over to the pastor in Fiskdale. I had not seen him since our college days, when he was a senior during my freshman year.

I returned to the village in the evening, a few minutes too late, however, to catch the half-past eight car. An hour of waiting I spent at the Hall. As I went aboard the

ERNEST MARCY

car, I noticed that a man, who had passed me three or four times in the vicinity of the Hall, was coming towards me. I could not discern his features as he stood yet in the shadows. Then he came nearer, but he took the seat immediately behind mine, and I could not have a good view of him. I perceived, however, that he was looking at me, and that now and then, when the car was jolted, he moved a few inches towards my side of the car. The constant attention he seemed to be giving me might have annoyed me had I not taken my breviary from my satchel and begun to read the Office.

Suddenly, as we made a sharp turn in the road, there was an awful crash; the lights were extinguished with a flash, and we were left in total darkness; and down in a ditch by the side of the car a loud thud and the crackling of the shrubbery struck fright into us. With the shriek of the brakes that brought us to a standstill, a shrill scream came from two women at the front of the

THE APPARITION TO

car, and a stentorian voice behind cried out, "What's the matter, someone overboard?"

I jumped up and darted over to the opposite side of the car, thinking that I might have occasion to assist some dying person in the shrubbery. I was just about to step from the car, when a strong hand grabbed my arm; it was my neighbor who had been sitting behind me. "Pardon me," he said, "it's dangerous to step off there; a ditch; rather deep." I bowed and thanked him. The conductor saw us standing at the edge of the car and cried out, in what seemed to be an angry tone, "Don't get off there; sit down; it's only the trolley broke off; it fell over there in the bushes; it won't take long."

I need not recount in detail the transactions of the next few minutes. The five men on the car volunteered to help the conductor; my part was to take a red light ahead on the road to warn a car that might come from Springfield.

"It's not very safe walking ahead there,

ERNEST MARCY

Father," the conductor called to me; "there's a very narrow bridge over a stony gully, and a sharp turn in among the rocks, and they are so high up they may frighten you."

I smiled at his warning and waved the lamp in the air. He said he would call me when the trolley was set up again. In a few moments I was picking my steps cautiously over the narrow bridge. I knew from the sound of the water that the bed of the brook lay far below me; and I stopped to enjoy for a few moments the feeling of awe that could come to anyone there. A new tremor was given to me as I turned and saw a man coming towards me. In my heart I felt that it was the stranger who had been sitting behind me in the car; and so it was. Who was he and what did he want? Why had he passed me so often in Brimfield? Why had he taken a seat near me? Why, as it seemed, was he so anxious to speak to me? I placed my satchel on the bridge, made sure of my footing, and turned to meet him.

THE APPARITION TO

"Excuse me, sir," he said very gently, when he came alongside of me, "I thought that you might not object to a companion; it is rather desolate about here. I know the turn of the road quite well. Won't you let me carry the light?"

I thanked him, and added that the lamp was no burden, and that even if it was, it gave some heat and light against the night.

"I see, sir," he said with something of a smile and a pleasing nod of his head, "that you insist on seeing some good in everything."

I looked up at him; the thought entered my mind immediately that he had attended the services at the Hall and that his allusion was to my little sermon.

"It is a happy faculty," he continued. "I liked the way you made our homely valley speak when you preached this morning, sir."

Again I looked at him; but before I could reply to his praise he was talking again. "And I beg your pardon, sir, but I wanted

ERNEST MARCY

to speak with you afterwards; indeed, I might have intruded had you remained at the Hall; but I saw you drive away, and I regretted what I thought was a lost opportunity. When you returned this evening, my mind was still set on having a talk with you, sir; that is why I went aboard the car. I hope, sir, I did not seem to offend you."

While he was speaking we came out of the dark cut in the rocks at the bend in the road; we were walking leisurely, in uneven steps over the railroad ties. The white starlight, while it enabled me to see his face quite plainly, intensified what seemed to be a cast of subdued sorrow upon his countenance. Perhaps it was something else than sorrow,—a great doubt, I thought, or worry. But I could not read the look well in the short moment I had or in the uncertain light. His eyes seemed fixed hard ahead on the road, looking intensely at the far-off trees. What thought lay behind those eyes? I asked myself; what was causing them to stare into the

THE APPARITION TO

dark night? What was the history of this man? Was there some great grief locked up in his heart, some strong temptation across his path, or a terrible sin, perhaps, blackening his life and stinging his conscience with remorse?

I stopped walking and said as gently as possible, "No offense, I assure you; indeed, it was fortunate that you were so near me when I was about to step from the car into the ditch. And," I turned quietly towards him, "I am indeed grateful to you."

He turned from the road and pointed to a group of pine trees, saying, "We might go in here, sir; the night air does not fall so heavily under the trees."

I did not immediately follow his invitation. A feeling of prudence took possession of me. Who was this utter stranger, I again asked myself, that I should trust myself to him in the dark of the woods? I pretended to be examining the lamp to have time to think. Was it wise to move from the road

ERNEST MARCY

with him? If he had some story of himself to tell me, why could he not relate it in the open air? Still, I said, if he has some burden on his mind, and I can minister to it, I will go to the very heart of the woods if that will help him. "The lamp," I said, stepping over the rail, "how can the lamp be seen in there?"

"O, we can arrange for that," he said, as he came forward; "the car, if it comes at all while we are here, must approach very slowly because of the curve over there. I'll set the lamp on one of the ties between the rails and that will make certainty more certain."

He took the lamp from my hand and set it down, picking out a broad, level tie for it to rest on. I felt that he had some secret to tell me; and I went close to him under the shelter of the trees.

"Here is a seat," he began, looking towards the trunk of a fallen tree. "I know it well, for I sometimes stroll through the woods this far, and sit here with my

THE APPARITION TO

thoughts." There was a pause, as we were selecting a comfortable seat. "I have plenty of time for thinking, sir, and plenty of thought, too."

If he wished to reveal something of moment I had better come to the point, I reasoned within myself; we could not remain there all night; therefore, I should question him directly. "I beg your pardon; are you a Catholic?"

"No, sir," was his reply in a very gentle tone; "I am of no church. I used to go to the Methodist church when I was a child, but church-going gets out of the lives of many of us. The churches seem to change, or we change or something changes,—anyway, I don't go to church where I went long ago."

"And how did you come in there to-day?" I asked.

"You know, sir, I suppose, that a clergyman from some college has been coming to the Hall this summer. I read in our town-paper that he would give some lectures in the

ERNEST MARCY

evenings and that the public was invited to attend them. In Brimfield we have very few opportunities of this kind, and I eagerly took advantage of this one. I found the lectures interesting. A curiosity to see what the other part of the clergyman's work was like brought me to the service this morning. You are not surprised, sir," he looked towards me and bowed courteously, "you do not wonder that I did not understand the ceremonies?"

I would have replied, but he did not wait for any word from me.

"Two things impressed me very much,—very much indeed, sir; the profound seriousness of the people during the service, and secondly, your discourse about the wayside of life. I felt that I had more reason to appreciate that than any other person in your congregation. But, I beg pardon, sir"; he turned to me as if in apology, "that may seem presumptuous."

"Well," I replied, as he waited for me to

THE APPARITION TO

say something, "while I can not admit that the sermon was very illuminating, though it is kind of you to think so, I feel that some of the people there might dispute with you the question of its personal adaptation. The history of the daily graces in the life of almost every one of them would, if they but knew them and would reveal them, be far more interesting than the scenes of a picturesque country wayside."

"It is not a scene of natural pictures I mean, sir; though even on that score, there was a particular aptness for me. I own a small mill back along the valley, which, I fancy, came in as one of your illustrations to-day. Again, I have turned a portion of a hillside into a rather prosperous garden, and that, too, was suggestive to you. But the strangest thing of all," he began to speak quite solemnly, sitting upright and firm as if to lend his utterance greater strength, "the strangest thing of all, sir, was a third portion of my history that you seemed to reveal. I

ERNEST MARCY

am afraid, sir," he leaned towards me with a deep look of pathos and spoke with measured slowness, "I hardly feel that you will believe the incident if I relate it."

He waited for a word from me. I glanced over at him and said as calmly as possible, "Whatever this incident may be, you seem to believe it; I will surely believe that much of it,—that you believe it. And," I added, trying to assure him, "you have already confessed that you had something that you wanted to tell me; that is another reason why I should listen and try to understand your feeling about the matter." Suddenly I became conscious of our circumstances; I stood up and looked off in the direction of our car. "The car," I said, "what if the car should be ready for travel by this? You will not have time to make your story long."

"It will not be long, sir; and the car will not be easily repaired; they must wait for the next car to push them up to the switch. But about the incident;" I resumed my seat

THE APPARITION TO

and he went on eagerly; "I do, indeed, wish to tell you of it, after what you said this morning. You recall that you spoke about sudden thoughts or lights that flash across our lives, and illuminate our minds, as if it were a spiritual vision that makes clear our way to the truth and quickens our steps to it."

I might have taken a few moments to make sure that he understood my meaning; but time was wanting, I thought, and I could afterwards explain to him, if he had been led into any error.

"Here is my story, sir," he spoke with determination and distinctness. "A little over five years ago, I went to live in the West; and about a year ago, with the prospect of rising to some prominence in a large railroad, I became a conductor on one of the night trains; I prefer not to mention the name of the road, nor the cities on my route. At one of the cities we used to meet a train coming from the south; the next station was

ERNEST MARCY

two hundred miles away, with no long stop till we reached it, so we used to couple the trains and make the run together. One night, as we were running between the stations I mention, I was sitting in my apartment arranging the tickets and running through my accounts. Suddenly a vibrating light, of a peculiar tint, filled my room. I looked up; the little apartment had stretched to double its size. Had I been sleeping? Was I only half awake? I rubbed my eyes, and looked up at the lamp; I felt the cold woodwork of my desk. I was fully awake. But the room was still twice as large as it used to be; the walls were extended back and outward. I stood up with a spring that almost flung me against the door. But a more appalling sight grew into my eyes. In the open space of the room a struggle was going on; two or three men were locked in one another's arms, and were twisting and kicking about in a frantic manner. I could stand there no longer. For a moment my brain

THE APPARITION TO

grew red hot with the awful thought that I was losing my mind. I shot towards the door and leaped out into the vestibule; it was dimly lighted and everything was silent there amid the berths. I waited for a few moments with my hand hard on the door knob."

His hand nearest me was holding fast a broken branch of the tree. As he stopped to breathe, for he had been speaking with a rapid earnestness, his lips were apart but tightly drawn, his teeth were firm together, his jaw hard set, and his eyes looked out piercingly into the darkness. I was afraid that the strain of the narration would work on his mind; I might have interrupted him, but he took a deep breath and went on, for the most part speaking in a whisper.

"I could not remain outside the door; something urged me to go in. I opened the door, entered the room, and braced my back against the door. The struggle was still on, more intense than before, and clearer to my

ERNEST MARCY

eyes. I could almost touch the turning and twisting shapes. I leaned forward to get a closer view; two men were crushing a prostrate form. I could hear no sound but the even hammering of the wheels beneath the car, keeping time to my pulsing heart. I went nearer and could discern the faces. Then I saw the prostrate man; it was the other conductor. He was being murdered; they were smothering him. I jumped to the door again and yelled. Out in the vestibule I shouted with all my might, I do not know what. I may have cried 'Help! Murder!' I do not know, only that I yelled at the top of my voice.

"Quickly three men slid from their berths in great alarm. I made a fatal mistake in not keeping my wits; I should have asked some passenger to follow me to the conductor's room. I stood motionless and wild-eyed. They saw me staring down the aisle like a madman and took me to be insane, as I afterwards found out. They came up cau-

THE APPARITION TO

tiously to me, and grabbed me, at a signal from one of them, and the force of their combined strength threw me to the floor. By this time all the men were out of their berths and were quickly dressing themselves. 'I am not crazy,' I cried to them; 'they are murdering the conductor,—out in the last car,—out in the last car,—go out there and you'll find him dead or dying.' Not one of them took heed of a word I said; I can not understand why they so disbelieved me. A man came forward with some straps from his satchel; my hands and feet were soon bound fast. I cried again, 'The other conductor,—out in the last car; he's dying; quick.' As they stood me up to carry me to my room, I caught sight of a clergyman dressed like you, sir, darting for the door. He went, as I learned afterwards, to the place that I indicated, and the horror was there before him; he found the conductor at the point of death. He called for help, and then knelt by the dying man, holding his

ERNEST MARCY

hand and saying some prayer over him. The conductor died three minutes after the clergyman reached him.

“A signal was given to the engineer to stop the train at the next station. Men were placed as guards over each car, and word was sent down the aisle that no one would be allowed to leave the train. The engineer signalled for the police as we drew slowly into the station, and soon the officers were aboard the train. All the passengers were put under arrest; word was sent to the district attorney; his order came back that the train should be held over till the court in the morning. I was taken to the police station as being the most suspected; and eight others, whom special detectives picked out as probable participants, were also locked up. A powerful opposition to the detention of the train was made by several business men, and a special court was summoned at an early hour. Some witnesses had been called to the stand when it came my turn to appear. Be-

THE APPARITION TO

fore I could be asked a question, my eyes glanced about the room, first at the corner where the eight suspects were seated, and then among the other passengers. Imagine my feelings when I saw, there in the midst of the unsuspected, the two very faces that I beheld in my room the night before,—the murderers of the conductor. I stepped from the stand, and pointing to the men, I said, ‘Your Honor, there are the men who killed the conductor; arrest them.’ An officer came over to me at a sign from the judge and marched me back to the stand. Nobody took any heed of my announcement; I suppose the rumor was abroad that I was demented. Then I gave my testimony,—the history of the night,—including, of course, the apparition that I have just related to you,—and nothing came of it. Pity, it seemed to me, rather than any semblance of belief, I read in the countenances of the assembly. I was led from the stand, but not before I had again pointed to the two men

ERNEST MARCY

and asked the judge to have them put on the witness box."

"What did the judge say?" I forgot myself and interrupted him.

"He pompously explained that the court could accept only wide-awake testimony; the imagination of a dream had no weight. I called his attention to the other fact,—the murder of the conductor; I saw that; my vision of that was no dream. But the judge would have it that while I was dozing over my desk, some sound of conflict, the cry of the conductor, perhaps, escaped through the window of his room and entered mine and that the sound, vaguely heard, worked into my half-conscious mind, and so I came by the feeling that I had experienced. He would admit that there was a remarkable coincidence,—that was all.

"I argued against his explanation,—quite calmly, lest the court would have reason to doubt of my sanity. I insisted that I had been wide awake; that the rumbling noise of

THE APPARITION TO

the train made it impossible to hear any cry from such a distance; that I had stood up and left the room, and returned after a few moments. Of this last statement he said I had no witness; the court could only know that I had appeared at the door yelling like a madman; testimony had been given of that. In vain did I reiterate my certainty of the apparition; nothing came of it. The two murderers, as I believe them, were dismissed with the others of the party and the train took them off to their destination."

"But you said that you had been suspected?" I asked him; "how did you remove the imputation?"

"That was easily done," he answered quickly. "Two porters testified that they had been near my room the half hour preceding my cries for help, and that they were sure I was in the room during that time."

He stopped talking and leaned forward, resting his elbows on his knees. I had my own thoughts about the entire story, but I

ERNEST MARCY

did not express them. I arose and made a gesture towards the railroad, saying, "Perhaps we should go back and see how our car stands."

My strange companion rose too, and moved forward with me. He did not want to drop his thoughts, however. He came quite close to me, and asked gently, "And you, sir, what do you think of the affair?"

I did not care to venture forth a hasty opinion, so I answered as if in pleasantry, "You do not wish to have me condemn the right honorable court, do you?"

"We can let the court pass," he said, with a wave of his hand; "let that pass. What do you think of the incident itself? You spoke this morning of lights that come to us, sometimes by day, sometimes by night, like a vision, and the truth becomes brighter, and our hearts are strong to action. Now," he raised his hand, as he saw me about to interrupt him, "I beg pardon, sir, but this vision which I saw,—I know I saw it,—what has it

THE APPARITION TO

done for me, or what good has it done at all? My word in the courtroom had no value."

I was about to tell him the other meaning of my words when suddenly another thought directed my speech. "You ask what good this vision, as you call it, effected? Let me ask you a question; do you know if the other conductor was a Catholic?"

"O, I omitted a point about that, sir," he quickly answered. "As they lifted the conductor to his couch, they undid his collar. A sort of badge which he wore about his neck appeared, and they say that when the clergyman saw it, he lifted his hands and whispered, 'Thank God, I reached him in time.' I suppose you understand why he said that, sir."

"Yes, indeed," I replied, "the man was a Catholic. That was the evidence of the badge, as you call it. Now let me show you the part you played in a very important work. I pass over the actuality of your vision,—I mean no offense, my good friend,

ERNEST MARCY

I merely transmit the question of its reality. I consider the other part,—your cry, which startled the passengers and sent the priest—the clergyman you refer to—quickly to the side of the dying man. That was most fortunate, a benefit to him beyond all telling. Suppose,” I turned towards him, noting his eager attentiveness, “suppose when they reached the dying conductor, they could have revived him and brought him back to consciousness, and then asked him to make some important request, as he had but a few moments to live. What do you think he would have demanded? The priest! ‘Send me a priest,’ he would have cried. Family and home would not be in his mind, nor fortune, nor any thought of his assassins; it would be the priest. ‘Send me the priest’ would have been his only word. Now, then, your notification to the travellers that night enabled him to have his dying request. I do not ask you to believe that it was an important service you rendered; I merely wish to assure

THE APPARITION TO

you that the dying man obtained what he would have requested had he been conscious. And you, by reason of the apparition you speak of, were the means of having a dying man's wish fulfilled."

We had only reached the tracks, having come there slowly, with many halts and small steps. I looked down the track; there was no sign of light from the direction of the car. My companion was entirely taken up with his thoughts; he did not seem to have any further question; by the way he stood, silent and pensive, he revealed to me that his mind was feeding on what he had just heard.

"Again," I broke the silence, coming over to him, "let me show you another consideration. Let me suppose that you did point out the very murderers; can you see the consequence of your awful manifestation of them? I say, let us suppose that the two men whom you indicated were the very assassins. They sat there, you said, unperturbed. You did not know their feelings,—the terrible an-

ERNEST MARCY

guish of their minds. Even if you had made no sign of detection, they shall suffer; I need only the word of one of our poets to voice that truth for you, the awful realization of punishment that came to the regicide Macbeth:

'It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak; . . .
To bring forth the secret'st man of blood.'

Now your revelation of their crime, supposing, I repeat, that they were guilty, must have shocked them to the very depths of their souls. How did you come by that knowledge? they will ask. How did you so unerringly discern the culprits whom the skilled detectives had not even guessed at? You have started in their minds a long train of thought, a long, almost endless question that will be a companion to the pangs of their outraged conscience. You have written their guilt before them, like the finger on the wall—you remember your Bible days?—

THE APPARITION TO

you have told them that their crime is not hidden.

“Now, just one word more,” I added, before he could speak, even if he wished to. “Let me show you that some good may come to them from what you call your vision. I will say that these men belong to no religion,—certainly they were practising no Christian precept when they perpetrated that awful deed. Let me say that they are, like so many of our countrymen to-day, mere irreligionists, that is—in other words—they believe only in the eye and ear, the religion of the senses, trusting in the might of physical force, and fearing only the mandates of the civil law,—materialism, in a word, is their entire life. Now, as a consequence of your revelation, which they believe you could not have come to by any natural means, they have begun to realize that there is something more in the world after all than mere matter, than the information of the senses. They must realize this, and when they admit it, if

ERNEST MARCY

they did not before, they have learned a great truth; whether it shall lead them to higher things or not, I make no conjecture. I merely wish you to consider how your experience has most probably led a new thought into their minds and this perhaps will put a new problem into their views of life."

THE APPARITION TO

III

A sudden clang of bells and a flash of light beyond the curve in the road broke in on our meditation. I turned towards our red lamp immediately; my companion proposed that it be left there till we came forward on the car; it would serve as a signal in the meantime.

The commotion that prevailed at the car attracted our attention and put other thoughts out of our minds. We found the trolley still unrepaired; we were told that the car which had just come from Worcester would take us to the switch, propelling the disabled car, and then we could ride on to Springfield. When we were seated again, I thought of giving a consideration to my companion for his reflection, such as I had made concerning the murderers to him; but I judged it wiser not to burden his mind

ERNEST MARCY

further. However, he realized that, too; when we began to move slowly onward he turned to me and said, "I suppose that I should also look for a course of thought such as you have just explained on the part of the two assassins,—that some new truth must come to me from it, and, to be in keeping with your words this morning, in the brightness of this new truth to get the strong heart for action."

Still, I did not care to continue the consideration; I fortunately recalled a piece of information that I had received at the Hall. I gave it to him. "I was told at the Hall to-day that the Jesuit Father whose lectures you have been attending will speak on Brownson next Sunday evening. There is a subject that will be extremely interesting, not merely because Brownson was one of the profoundest of American minds, but because he has written quite extensively on the question of preternatural manifestations. If you care to, you can procure his

THE APPARITION TO

books on this subject, or the arguments in them from the lecturer next Sunday evening."

Whether the determination was in his mind or not to consult the lecturer, I did not learn. As I was speaking a gleam of light ahead gave a new attraction to our eyes and a little wonderment to our minds. My companion, who had kept a solemn silence by my side, caught sight of the glow of the lights and said, "That is the switch ahead, sir. I will return to Brimfield; this is the last car back." He moved nearer to me to assure himself, I thought, that the other passengers could not hear him. "I have reason to thank you, sir; you were kind to listen to me."

I had one question for him: "May I ask how you came to make your residence in Brimfield?"

"With pleasure, sir," he replied. "When I went back to the office from that courtroom, I tendered my resignation. No paltry

ERNEST MARCY

motive or timidity prompted me to do so; I thought the officials might have felt as the passengers on the train did,—that I was somewhat unbalanced mentally. I stayed two weeks in their service to prove to them that I was thoroughly sane. They besought me with numerous proposals to remain with them. I would not; I came East; this part of the country I knew well since my boyhood days. I found a quaint corner of farmland in Brimfield. I enjoy the environment; I have opportunities for active industry; my little library is interesting. And, sir, about Brownson, whom you mentioned, . . .” He could not finish his sentence; we had reached the side of the Springfield car and I was looking anxiously about. “That is your car, sir; they will ask you to hurry,” he said with gentle courtesy.

Cries for us to make haste did, indeed, fill the air. I went directly to my car and was mounting when I suddenly stepped back to the side of my Brimfield friend, and shook

THE APPARITION

his hand, saying, "May I ask your name?"

He anticipated the request, it seemed; in his hand was a card which I had seen him take from his pocket when we were leaving the car. I bade him a kind and hearty adieu, and waved to him as my car made ready to start. He ran towards me, jumped lightly upon the running board, leaned towards me, and lifting his hat, said, "Catholics call you 'Father,' do they not?"

I made an affirmative bow, wondering at his question. I recalled that he had been addressing me "Sir" all the evening.

He stepped back; the car moved on; I heard him call, "Good-night, Father."

In a moment I was riding through the dark woods. I was holding in my hand the card of Ernest Marcy; and soon I was running through in my mind the impressive history that he had in all truthfulness, with a clear mind and steady nerves, related to me there in the stillness of the night under the quiet shelter of the pine trees.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

I

THE School Committee of our little town of Sturidge did not receive a special commission from the selectmen or from the people to instil political ambitions into the minds of the school children. Names of national greatness might, of course, be pointed to, and it was laudable to hold up as an exemplar the Father of his country, and to proclaim time and time again that he was first, and where he was first, namely, in peace, in war, and in the hearts of his countrymen. This might pass as the peroration of any speech that one of the School Committee felt inspired to make in any classroom of the town. But it was generally understood that there was to be no meddling with local politics. The history of only one native

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

of Sturidge was sanctioned as an instance of political greatness, the illustrious career of a townsman who became a national character. "He had come to these schools; he had studied in them; he went forth from them; he went, he worked, he triumphed; he became Governor of New York; he was Secretary of War under one President and Secretary of State under another."

This was a passage out of an address by Rev. Sylvanus Hopwood one day in Lower Grammar; and well do I remember how Johnny Desmond repeated it verbatim and jubilantly to his father that evening after school. Johnny had all the healthy enthusiasm of a boy for dashes of oratory, and he always found a sympathetic audience at home for the after-recital.

"Sure, darlin', is it a President you'd expect to be?" asked his good-natured mother one evening. "Wisha, it's as easy for you to be Queen of England, or the Jahr of the Russhies; though if you were the Queen you

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

might do one good turn and free Ireland."

Johnny had come home from school that day with a sentence out of the teacher's eloquent utterances: Miss Guthrie, descendant of a French Huguenot, was a teacher of Lower Grammar, and she had a little notebook (with a flat rubber band about it and a tiny white pencil attached to it) full of worn phrases to inspire her young American subjects.

"Mother," whispered Johnny, "Miss Guthrie said to-day that every American boy has a right to become President of the United States."

"Glory be," said his mother, as if incredulous.

Johnny placed his hands behind his back, as a senator might do on a platform, and said very solemnly, "Well, I am going to be something, if not President."

"Sure, an' that is why we have ye at school, darlin'," answered his mother kindly. "It's little chance yer father or mesel' had to

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

get much o' that same learnin'. It's our own fathers who had to study their letters from the gravestones in the church-yard." She went on with her household work; "But we'll see that you, Johnny, and the rest o' the childer gets as much as the town can give; an' if the father's gardens prosper, God wil-
lin', we may let some of ye off to college. Won't we, alanna?" she said, stooping down to kiss little Margaret, who was peering over Johnny's arm at his book.

And each day's progress in Lower Grammar was faithfully reported by the youthful scholar of the Desmond house, under the cheerful glow of the evening lamp. Miss Guthrie, on an afternoon stroll, would sometimes stop before the white gateway and add to the delight of Mrs. Desmond by contributing further testimony. "I hope the School Committee will call John for some special work the next time they visit us," she said one day; "and I'll let you know how he does."

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

IX

Neither teacher nor mother imagined that the next visit of these great men of learning would lead to a hitherto unknown example of political endeavor, or that, after a mere innocent sentence of congratulation, a school-boy of thirteen years would thrill with ambition and set his feet firmly upon the first rungs of the political ladder. Yet if his present exalted position in civic life become an incentive for some pen to write his biography, I do not think that this chapter of his career will be to his reproach, no matter howsoever numerous are the men who have used patronage to their personal aggrandizement and afterward ignobly "scorned the base degrees by which they did ascend."

In estimating this chapter of his life, the following considerations must be taken into

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

the reckoning. First, though the logical force of the statement which the School Committee made that day in Lower Grammar was not powerful or even meant to be such, the circumstances that accompanied its utterance made it inspiring. For there were the great personages themselves, the three grand inquisitors, with plenipotentiary powers. Rev. Sylvanus Hopwood, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was one of them, a dignified gentleman always, a great student, as we all thought from the way he appeared with magazines and books under his arm, when he was returning from the post office or the library. Mr. James Ammidown was the next important figure, a member of the school board long before we were born; the tenor soloist in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in everything but politics he was a democrat to every man and child of the town. What could have made him a more wondrous being in our childish eyes than that he kept a night school in his

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

own quaint cottage under four great oak trees (where the Druids of Gaul would have built a shrine), and that our own fathers, who loved learning and could not get it across the ocean, studied the three R's under "Ammidown" two nights a week in the winter time. And the third member of the Committee, Mr. Charles Hafferty, was the idol of every schoolboy, because, smart lawyer and all that he was, he played baseball so well on Saturday afternoons with our village team. This athletic ability of a professional man was the marvel of our young minds; and I think that if we had a case of life and death before the court, we should have entrusted it in full confidence to the great shortstop of Sturidge, Lawyer Hafferty.

And finally let it be remembered, too, in our judgment of Johnny Desmond, if we come to read his biography, that it was a marked day in life, both inside and out of the schoolroom, when the Committee came on one of its grand visitations. First of all the

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

weather was perfect, as it seemed to be in our fairy books. A cloudless sky hung in delight above the bright world, and the air itself, as if electrically surcharged, vibrated with the animated hints of large expectations which the teacher announced every five minutes. The great millpond behind the school stood majestic, and made a picture worthy of some vista amid the academic walks of Oxford; and from its rippling surface, brilliant reflections of the sun flashed forth and danced upon the ceiling of the classroom. When a lull came in the sprite-like dance over our heads, there was a craning of necks out of the window, and whispers went across the aisles: "Maybe they are coming now."

Miss Guthrie, quick to notice the restlessness, gently tapped the desk with her pencil, and said, though not as indignantly as at other times, "Children, attention: I must not ask for attention again this morning."

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

Her own eyes, however, from an exalted position, took in, while they pretended not to, the entire entourage of the building; and her ears strained to catch the hoped-for shuffling of feet in the hallway.

To our childish minds, which were not versed in the science of accurate reasoning, this perfect weather, attendant upon the Committee's visit, came as an effect from one mighty cause. The logic of our feelings led to this unexpressed deduction: that it was impossible for the winds to be rough or for the sky to be crowded with desolate clouds when the Committee started out on its tour. We did not suspect that a pleasant day was a prerequired condition for our great dignitaries, that it was a *sine qua non* to their meeting and their triumphal embassy to our school.

And the joy and beauty which seemed to reign in the sky and on the fields and water found dominion within doors. How fresh the blackboards looked, as if a magic wand

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

had waved before them and dissipated every particle of chalk dust into airy nothingness. How orderly the desks appeared, cleared of every encumbrance, like the deck of a battleship ready for action, with no risk to be taken from useless articles during the hour of conflict. Laws of symmetry governed every nook and corner; the blue cambric curtains hung at the same length; a geranium in blossom stood central on all the windowsills; five chalk boxes made a pyramid on a corner shelf; and the chalk erasers kept even distances along the blackboard troughs.

This last feature of the scene met the disapproval of Elmer Simpson, a Scotch boy, with a big collar rolling over the top of his coat, and his Highland hat always tightly clasped in his hand. To his eye the mathematical precision that regulated the distance between the erasers was too constrained. "I'd rather see them, so I would, lie around in any old order, like the cows—see them,"

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

he whispered, "see them up there on Whitaker's hill."

"Elmer Simpson," called the teacher with apparent sternness, though her tone left it doubtful whether she spoke in exclamation or interrogation. It was the tone she used when she was not certain about the conduct of the subject whom she addressed; from the attitude of the pupil in response, she could decide whether to administer a rebuke or issue some non-committal order.

"Please?" was Elmer's answer, as he arose according to our custom, and stood (not according to the prescribed manner) with legs crossed and leaning with both hands upon his desk.

"Elmer, please go to the door."

He started forward and looked across the room in a way that asked, "What have I done now?"

And the teacher finished her speech. "Our visitors are upon the steps. Now, children, do your best, and show the Committee how

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

well we can do on this side of the river. I want to be proud of you, and to tell your mothers all about it."

Elmer opened the door. There stood the three plenipotentiaries (Eddie Laughlin used the word and pronounced it almost correctly), and they were waiting like actors for their cue to come upon the stage. Perhaps they had intended to call first at the room across the hallway; but when they heard the rattle of our doorknob, and saw the door swing open, they ceased the consultation and stepped forward into Lower Grammar's timid reception. It was as if the curtain had lifted in our little village theatre, and we were watching attentively the order of the actors' entrances. First came Mr. Hopwood, clergyman, then Mr. Hafferty, lawyer, and then the great favorite of all the children and of their fathers, Mr. Ammi-down.

Miss Guthrie stepped from the platform and received the distinguished salutations.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

Very likely the visitors did not notice the bright red color that came to her cheeks, for it appeared the moment the door opened upon the scholarly ambassadors. We were accustomed to teacher's blushes, having the sight of them every day, when the stove or some pupil showed any unruliness. But the red cheeks glowed more vividly on this occasion, and even Elmer Simpson conjectured as he returned to his seat, that "teacher's mind is all a-fluster. She forgot to make us stand."

As the hour wore on, the spirit of equanimity came to Miss Guthrie, and Lower Grammar got a concomitant feeling of confidence. Even timid little Ellie Magrath answered the examiners with assured voice. Problems in decimal fractions and percentages had been given; catchwords in spelling had gone up and down the aisles; the remotest corners of the world had been searched with geographical questions; reading lessons in all manner of voice had been

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

heard; and now only a few minutes of the great hour remained for further inquiries.

Mr. Ammidown came from his seat on the platform and with a happy smile addressed the class. "What was a notable battle in the Civil War?"

There was no attempt at response till Miss Guthrie, who was standing at a window, fingering a curtain tassel, stepped forward. "Answer, children, answer. Name a notable battle of the Civil War."

"Marching through Georgia," shouted Elmer Simpson in his usual impetuous way.

"Bull Run," said a lad in the back row, and then hid his head at the consternation which he noticed on the faces of all.

Then a group, that took courage under the voice of unison, shouted "Gettysburg."

"And what do you say, Johnny Desmond, to the battle of Fredericksburg?" asked Mr. Ammidown, as he turned toward his fellow-committeemen. It was one of the innumerable questions that showed how conversant

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

Mr. Ammidown was with the private history of the children—in this case that he knew young Desmond's father had fought with the Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg.

Johnny hung his head with a modesty that would have become any lady of the land. He lifted his large brown eyes to the questioner, and answered (a footnote which he had memorized from a page in history), "Please, sir, the London *Times* correspondent said that never since Fontenoy was there such a charge made as that of the Irish Brigade up Marye's Heights."

"A capital answer," whispered the minister to the lawyer. "Genius, indeed, to quote an Englishman and the *Times*, too, in testimony of an Irish Brigade."

Mr. Ammidown was delighted for the same reason. He turned towards the teacher and asked in a low voice, "May I send him to the board?"

"John Desmond, take your place at the board. This way," she added when the boy

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

started for his section of the board at the rear of the room. "Take that place near the door."

Johnny walked to the front of the room. Large-eyed wonderment marked the faces of his classmates, as he took up a long piece of chalk and turned attentively for the problem. The anticipation of "an original example," such as Mr. Ammidown intended to give, was stunning to young minds, and even the situation and the intervening suspense heightened the tint of red upon Miss Guthrie's cheeks. She came over from the window and stood by the desk of Ellie Magrath, revolving her long pencil between her nervous fingers. The two visitors on the platform leaned eagerly forward to weigh each word and every movement of the young protagonist. Every boy and girl in the room glanced excitedly at everything observable, looking for approval now and then to the teacher, who met their eyes and bowed kindly to each of them. And little Desmond

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

stood manfully waiting at his post, his face turned towards the great questioner and the problem, in his eyes a gracious modesty, but not fear,—a gentle reverence, but not weakness.

It has been my good fortune to have attended academic and forensic scenes of great éclat in many parts of the world. I have witnessed the conferring of degrees at Oxford and in a university among the Alps; I stood within arm's length of Choate in his legal prime when he was pleading a case of gigantic financial import before the Supreme Court of the United States; I have seen a hall in a Western city crowded with dignitaries of Church and State and University, while a young Spanish Jesuit defended theses in philosophy and theology for four hours; and I have listened to representatives from all the English-speaking world proclaim their social panaceas at the last session of their congress. But out of all the observations of the years, the scene that

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

comes back to me with the most loving remembrance is that of Lower Grammar on the day when little Johnny Desmond stood by the blackboard, facing the academic dons of our village. No rosebud, fresh and healthy upon its stem, held in its heart surer promise of glory in the splendor of June days than this honest and ambitious school-boy seemed prophetic of a great career in citizenship, the child that is father to a true American man.

“Now this is the problem,” said Mr. Amidown; “a good example under taxation.” He spoke kindly, but with an air of importance that should lend the problem befitting grandeur.

Then came the enunciation of all the details: the town needed to raise so many thousands of dollars; part of this sum could be obtained from poll and dog taxes, and a portion remained over from last year’s appropriation; the taxable property of the town was this number of millions of dollars;

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

and finally, "What would Ezra Harding have to pay this year if his property is valued at three thousand dollars?"

Johnny had placed each essential item on the board, omitting all irrelevant things, and rapidly but carefully he went through the process to the answer, leaving his work clear upon the board so that the examiners might follow. Then he turned and said, "He will have to pay sixty dollars, and with his poll tax, sixty-two dollars."

He stood ready to explain the "process" of his work. But his examiners had followed each step with ease, and now, their hour being ended, they arose and extended their congratulations to the teacher. Mr. Ammi-down stepped towards Johnny and placed his hand upon the little head, saying, "That was well done, very well done indeed."

"Splendid, little man," added the minister.

"The work of a professional assessor," was the lawyer's verdict.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

“And we must make you assessor of Sturridge when you grow up,” said Mr. Ammidown, as the Committee stood at the door and bowed farewell.

It was this last statement that was carried home in high glee by the little scholar of the Desmond house. And in the telling of it, the spirit of the day was the moving power; the perfect weather, the zealous attitude of the class, the pompous ceremonial of the hour, the scholarly potentates who witnessed the scene and gave the inspiring verdict.

The first news of the magnificent performance came from Miss Guthrie's lips. She met Mrs. Desmond near the bridge. “Johnny did exceedingly well to-day, Mrs. Desmond, exceedingly well, before the Committee, too. You can be proud of him.”

“God bless you, Miss Guthrie. Sure you always have the kind word, and thank you. I'll walk a bit of the road with you.”

Johnny had taken a short way through the valley to his father's gardens. And John

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

Desmond, senior, was a man to listen with full sympathy to the enthusiastic recital of his devoted son. Perhaps there were tears in his eyes; surely they were glistening as he turned to show Johnny where he intended to set a row of gooseberry bushes this year. The warm spring air seemed redolent with promise of a successful year. "And it's a good word that Ammidown has for young and old, it is." He stooped over the weeds which he had pulled out of the ground. "Sure, he'll get our votes at the town meeting; and I hope we will nominate him at the caucus, even though the Republicans name him to-morrow night."

"Is it a Republican caucus to-morrow night, father?" asked Johnny; but he did not wait for an answer. He took a rake and began to gather the weeds into piles; but his thoughts were on other things. The hour in Lower Grammar lived over and over again in his heart, each time increasing its glory, and opening wide the road to his ambitious

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

spirit. By night his heart was aglow with youthful emotions; and before he could close his eyes in sleep, a great plan had come to him. "In the morning, yes, to-morrow morning," he whispered to himself, as his head fell back into the wide, wonderful world of dreams.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

III

Early in the morning Johnny was out behind the house, walking along by the stone wall. When he sat down, apparently to watch the busy hens, his attentive ear caught the small sputtering noise of the soft earth as it opened to countless bits of vegetation that were forcing their way up to the warm light. His eye looked closely at the ground, and unconsciously his own ambitious spirit took lesson of the scene that he was witnessing; hardy little plants working a way up into the world, some with spears, and others curled up, as if they were men with bent backs lifting a great load, and all driving the earth out of their way, splitting it wide open, like earthquakes in miniature.

Mrs. Desmond, as she looked from the

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

window, observed Johnny's studious mood. The spell of yesterday's achievements was still on the house; and though this was Saturday, and the mother might need her boy to help her, she told him after breakfast to go off for play, "and maybe it would be time enough at eleven o'clock to go to the father's gardens and lend a hand."

"I won't be gone that long, mother," was his answer. And in less than five minutes he was speeding down the street; but he was not headed for "Otis field," where the boys went on Saturday mornings.

As soon as he crossed the bridge, and was out of sight of his home, he turned his steps to the right and set his eyes on the brick church near Mr. Hopwood's house. He stopped for a few minutes, gazing in at the forge of the blacksmith shop; for his mind had something that worried him. "Was it right to go to see the minister?" he asked himself. "Mother would be worried, and why didn't I tell her? And father is a Dem-

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

ocrat. But I'll see the minister. It's only business; and mother will not mind when it's all over. And father knows that it isn't the same in politics as in other things. These are town offices. And I know Mr. Hopwood will think it is all right, and he'll help me. Didn't he hear Mr. Ammidown say that I'm able to be assessor?"

He resumed his march again at quickstep; but when he came before the minister's house, his heart failed him again and he was afraid to go up to the door. He walked on to the next corner, and returned. "Maybe I'll meet him going to the post office," was his thought.

But though Johnny walked up and down the street, very much ashamed of himself for appearing so frequently before the blacksmith shop, and for passing the same grocery wagon so often, the minister did not come within his range of vision. Nine o'clock rang from the town-hall bell, and Johnny was on the verge of becoming dis-

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

consolate. He was a soldier's son, however, and he would not tire of standing at his post, or of keeping his pass; desertion touched no drop of his people's blood.

Suddenly a thought came to him, and he turned down the high embankment that surrounded the church, "Maybe the minister goes into the church to practice his sermon on Saturday." He walked out to the edge of the great terrace at the rear of the edifice, and, to his delight, he saw Mr. Hopwood in among some hedges, walking here and there, examining little plots in his garden. Johnny was afraid of appearing to be prying, and he fixed his gaze on the long black shed at the lower road. He had a brave heart, but it had been thoroughly schooled in reverence, and he knew that it would not be proper to approach a great man in his moments of private recreation. Out of the corner of his eye, he could see that the minister noticed him and was coming towards him.

"Good-morning, little man," said Mr.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

Hopwood, as he drew near. "I saw you in school yesterday, and remember that you did very well."

Johnny took off his hat and accepted the kind words with graciousness.

"And your father was one of the men at Fredericksburg? I have some new accounts of the battles, now appearing in a magazine, and I want to let you read them."

"Thank you, sir," answered Johnny, "and we would take good care of them at home."

"Well, come with me around to the house and I'll get them."

"If you please, Mr. Hopwood, I wanted to ask another favor of you." The little lad was almost frightened at the directness of his own words; but he clutched his hat tightly, to show courage to himself, and looked bravely up at the minister.

"Certainly, little man," said Mr. Hopwood quite solemnly, nor did he smile at the simplicity of the young ambassador's speech.

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

There were broken sentences in it, and haltings and repetitions, and some slips in grammar; but permeating it from exordium to peroration was the eloquence of a boy's soul, the earnestness and rightful ambition of a heart that would some day serve the State well.

This was the simple argument: The School Committee said that Johnny Desmond was capable of being assessor of Sturridge. Johnny Desmond was not a voter, but his father was, and therefore his father was eligible for the office; Johnny could attend to all the percentages and calculations; his father could collect all the figures, and the son would solve the problems. It was not a State election, and therefore it was possible for a Democrat to get a place on the Republican ticket; town offices were for town people. Mr. Hopwood knew the prominent men and could get them to nominate Johnny's father for assessor, and the Republicans would surely elect him. Per-

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

sonal friends from the other side would help, too.

Mr. Hopwood was as solemn as the little orator himself when the speech ended. He walked toward the house to get the magazines for the boy. "And have you spoken to Mr. Hafferty?" he asked. "He is a Democrat and could speak for your father."

"No, sir," was the reply. "He knows father and likes him, and I did not want to ask a personal friend of father's. But I think if the Republicans give him one of the places, he will get through. I knew that the Republicans have a caucus to-night and so I came to ask you about speaking to some of the leading men; for I suppose that you do not go to caucuses, as Father Kremmin doesn't go from our church."

An hour later, when the minister was at the post office, he met Mr. Bigelow, the chief actor in local politics. They went together to Bugbee's store and found Mr. Ammi-down reading the morning paper at his ac-

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

customed corner near the stove. He took the proposal with great enthusiasm and gave force to it with his own testimony. "It is not a position beyond the powers of the boy's father. I had Desmond in my night school several years ago, and he can attend to any calculations that he has to make. And, moreover, there are three assessors, you know, and there is no danger of any perplexing work to be done—most of it is figured out ahead. Besides, Desmond is a Civil War veteran and deserves well of the town, if any man ever did. So I say, Bigelow, go ahead and get him one of the places on our ticket. Get the nomination for John Desmond."

FOR ASSESSOR; JOHN DESMOND

IV

It was only in the morning that Johnny's father heard of the unexpected happening. He had returned from church early and was reading the Sunday paper from Worcester, and his eye came on the brief portion of Sturidge news. He read the item over and over again, and set his eyes fast on the printed appearance of his own name, holding the paper at arm's length, and then bringing it close to be assured there was no mistake.

"What's comin' to the world?" he asked himself aloud. "John Desmond, myself, nominated by the Republicans!"

His wife and children were at church, but they got the news of the great event as they came up the road. A neighbor's boy ran up

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

and cried jubilantly, "Johnny, your father was made assessor at the caucus last night."

And Johnny, now that his mother asked him, had to tell the whole story of the day before.

Mrs. Desmond did not worry the boy with any cross-examination. She had her scruples about the proceeding; "but now it's like spilt milk, and we mustn't cry over it," was the verdict of her philosophy. But that afternoon, when she came out of the church after the vesper service, she took her little Margaret by the hand and went across the lawn to meet Father Kremmin, to tell him the story of Johnny's action. "And, sure, Father," she asked, "is it well for the man to take the place, and him nominated by the influence of the minister?"

"Why, certainly, Mrs. Desmond," he answered. "Mr. Hopwood must have been edified by the lad. And Mr. Ammidown, who tells me how the children get along in the schools, once said that he would like to

FOR ASSESSOR: JOHN DESMOND

see Johnny get a chance to go to college some day. We'll hope for that."

The good mother was overjoyed at the assurance given to her, and she started home with her hand fast about little Margaret's.

Mr. Ammidown met her at the bridge, and, as he saluted her, he added, "John will be elected, Mrs. Desmond, and the Democrats, too, will doubtless nominate him next week." He turned to continue his walk, but another word of kindness made him speak again: "The father will keep the office till Johnny grows up to take it, unless, as we hope, the boy's good fortune allows him to go to college."

The words were the essence of joy to the mother. She hurried up the road to her home and whispered to Margaret, as she opened the little white gate, "For Assessor: John Desmond."

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

SOME of the old story-telling neighbors are living yet in "Little Ballycar." Time was when you could see any of the houses on that hillside in New England, which we called "Little Ballycar" after a place of the same name in Ireland,—time was, I say, when on some evening apt for stories, you might find an assembly of the good neighbors in any house there, and if you were no stranger, and you showed a liking for an old Irish song or story, you might have such pleasures to your heart's content. Every member of these gatherings, man or woman, had the gifts of seannachie or bard, and many of them had the powers of both, like the true Irish seannachie that could set his story to verse and the music of the harp.

Many an evening, while yet I was fond of standing by my mother's knee, did I lis-

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

ten to the ballads and the bewitching tales. Now and then, so vividly did they recount some incident of armed conflict with the hereditary foe, I imagined that I caught the clatter of horses' hoofs and the whispering of men behind the hedges, and then the rattle of musketry and the hot smell of powder. Or again I could see, as the earnest voice told of some lost traveller in the night, the faint light of a will-o'-the-wisp across a marshland, and a belated horse with its dazzled rider staggering over the sinking bog, and coming out in a clearing and then standing there dumb and motionless while a tribe of lilliputians danced gleefully about a fearful rath.

"God rest the poor souls that are gone," would a chorus of voices sing out at the end of such a story.

"And Amen!" said old Mat Magrath.

I always looked towards Mat, hoping that he would continue with one of his entrancing tales out of an unlimited fund that he had.

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

But being then in my teens, and therefore subject to the great law of children's etiquette, which is silence in the presence of elders, I never had the privilege of inviting "Mr. Magrath," as I should have called him then, to satisfy my intense desires.

Years afterwards, when I returned from college, I was allowed a broader admission to these delightful audiences, and so I could approach nearer to Mat. Proud he seemed to be when I would ask him for a story and then listen so attentively to him.

"Yourself with the Latin and Greek list'nin' to the likes o' me," he would say, as if reluctant to begin.

But I made sure to tell him that he was worthier of a better audience. "Life is more interesting than literature," I used to answer, thinking it a remarkable utterance; and I added, as I took him by the arm, "And you know more about life than I do about literature."

"Thin it's true," he would say, with that

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

sober shaking of his head, as he took a small pipe from his vest pocket and gathered crumbs of tobacco into it "from the heel of his fist," as he used to say. "Thin it's very true, Robert, astore, there be many more things in life nor are in the books; and stranger things they be, too, and yet for all that, truer nor the books could make them."

"And what's the easiest one for you to tell to-night?" I asked one Hallowe'en when I had leave to come home from college for the two holidays.

My younger brothers and sisters were making ready the old-fashioned games for their playmates who were coming to spend the evening at our house. Mat had taken his favorite chair near the fireplace; for my mother would retain some marks of her childhood home in Ireland; and consequently our fireplace was old-fashioned enough, with two huge pieces of turf as ornaments at the side. Mat was smiling genially at the activities of the young folks.

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

I gently put the question to him again.

“O, it’s easy enough to be tellin’ stories,” he made answer. “Sure, an old man is just full of such things, like the old towns home in Ireland, ready to speak to you at every turn, so they are, to tell you somethin’ about the past. Here in Amerikay, the new buildin’s goin’ up and the plans for others are like voices of the future. At home, sure it’s of the past they do be tellin’, the old ruins, and the mountains and the moors.”

He reached forward with the tongs to take out a lighted coal, though I was proffering a match to him, when I saw his pipe ready. He preferred his own way of lighting it; and when the pipe answered in large white streamers of smoke to his pulling and puffing, he sat erect and remarked very wisely, “And I hope old Ireland will look to her future always through her past, and go on to the new life that’s ahead of her, please God, along by the old roads of blessed and lastin’ memories.”

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

It seemed to me that Mat was drawing towards one of his philosophic moods; and knowing something of him under these lengthy spells, eloquent though they could be, I did not care to spoil my chances of hearing a good story. I nodded assent to his last utterance, and whispered, so that the children would not be tempted to come near us, "But the past lives in legend as well. For instance, this is Hallowe'en; surely you remember some beautiful evening long ago, —this night in your boyhood at home, some story about Hallowe'en."

"Yes, Hallowe'en, sure enough, and God rest the souls that are gone," he answered very slowly, his deep eyes peering far into the fire.

I did not have any remark to make, but I continued to look waitingly towards him. He glanced towards the children, who were migrating to another room for greater liberty in their games. My mother was occupied with them and preparing, after her own

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

fashion, the things that would give welcome to the older visitors.

Mat turned his eyes back towards me again, and said, "I mention the poor souls that are gone, Robert, because Hallowe'en reminds us that we are near a month that is a blessed one for them; November, when we remember them oftener in our prayers."

From his looks and from the peculiarly slow way in which he spoke, I felt that he was merely beating about in his memory for some tale that would be appropriate for the evening. Suddenly he leaned forward, and his dear old face lit up with animation. I knew that some line of memory had come to him.

"Did you ever hear tell in any of your studies of where Purgatory may be?" he asked very brightly.

I paused for a few moments at the novel question, and then quickly recalling a definition out of the catechism, I answered, "Purgatory is usually spoken of as a state

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

of being, not a place; it is a state that the souls are in, a condition of being."

"How very queer!" he replied very drily, before I could say more. "Sure the poor souls must be somewhere, in the state they are in, you say. Not in heaven, true enough, but not far off from it, thank God. And I do be wonderin', Robert, if some of them are not nearer nor we think, if we could only see them."

I might have attempted to give some little erudition that I had on the subject of Purgatory; but feeling that Mat was only discoursing in a preliminary fashion, with a story making ready at the tip of his tongue, I made no effort to speak. And the story came then.

"This is a bit of a history that is queer, you may think," he began. "And, Robert, alanna, sure if all is true that we do hear, thin maybe Purgatory for some people is not far from their graves. Anyway this is a true story, and the old priest who gave it to me

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

made sure to say over and over ag'in that it was true, and it's no harm for me to speak of it that way to you, as you will be tellin' it in your own way some day, and," he added very seriously, "be sure to say it's true."

And this is the story that I am narrating to you now, though I can not put it in the living voice of Mat Magrath, nor in anything like his impressive way with all the pauses and the solemn whisperings.

"I was a bit of boy," he moved a corner of his chair towards me, "a bit of a boy, Robert, when I stood one day at the great crossroads in Athenry. I do hear the young people say that there is a great hotel at the place now, and the railroads cross very near it, one goin' north and the other west to Galway. But the old abbey walls still lift up above the village and the thatched roofs down that way." He raised his arm and pointed backwards as if he could fix the very direction from his seat at our fireplace.

"Well, at all events, I remember the look

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

o' the abbey, Robert, acushla, and the day I stood at the crossroads. It's well I do. For something put it in the mind o' me to go down towards the broken arches and the high walls. And what do you think I saw when I got down in the shadow o' the place? There I was wonderin' and lookin' up at the stout walls and the arches, seein' the birds hoppin' in and out o' the ivy. And who came suddenly up to me but a monk all dressed in brown and white, not at all like any of the priests that served our parish church. For a moment the sight o' the stranger took a start out o' me. And then he smiled very kindly and threw back the hood that covered his long white hair. He beckoned me towards him, with a whisper and a motion of his hand; and proud I was to be called by him, though I had never seen his like before. Then he spoke to me with one o' the kindest o' voices, and to this day I remember as if it was yesterday, the very words and the way he spoke them. I need

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

not lengthen them out; sure, it's the main thing o' the story that you'll be wantin', Robert, dear."

I nodded my assent to him, and pulled my chair closer towards him. Mat was silent for a few moments, "thinkin' for to make the story as short as possible," he said.

"He was a monk from England," he began again; "but sure he was born in Ireland; and I see now, often when I think of it, that he had the faith o' the old people, comin' back all the far distance to Athenry in the west of Ireland to visit the ruins of the abbey. Sure it was to offer up the Holy Mass that he came back, to offer it up in one of the little niches that was foreninst you as you entered by the eastern wall, under the high broken arch. And the Bishop gave him permission to say Mass there, and he asked me to come down for the next five mornin's to serve him. Proud was the heart o' me for the favor. He would be stayin' with our own Soggarth down the road a bit, and I

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

was to come after him at six o'clock and carry the bundles with him to the old abbey."

"Did the people of the village know about the Mass, or were they allowed to come?" I asked, thinking of the pretty picture the scene must have made.

"Indeed and they did, for I made bold to whisper the tidin's abroad; and a power o' the people came, especially the old folks, who heard tell from their grandfathers of the monastery in its blessed days. Not one o' them but came every mornin' of the five mornin's. And they knelt outside beyond the ivy doorway on the last mornin' and waited till the kind old priest came out to bless them. And as they went home, you could see them turnin' and turnin', lookin' back at the tall gray walls."

"Did the monk go away, too?" I asked while Mat was leaning forward to poke the fire.

"Yes, then, Robert, on the fifth mornin', which was his last, he called me with a whis-

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

per, me standin' and waitin' for the vestments to be bundled up. And he asked me to walk with him all around the walls for a last look at the place. It's full of wonder he seemed at every turn, now lookin' up and gazin' long and thinkin', and now layin' his cheek agin some broken pillar of stone, as if it were a little child. And when he got through with the walkin', meself full o' the wonder as well, for the way he raised his holy eyes at all the poor, dear ruins, didn't he thin draw me to a low stone bench, and tell me to sit down, and he began to talk to me in a most solemn fashion, callin' me now and thin, 'Matthew, my little man.'

“‘Brethren of my Order,’ says he, ‘once lived in this abbey, and it’s not for me,’ says he, ‘to speak of the many ways they served God and helped the neighbors of the country round about. But,’ says he, ‘Matthew, my little man, let me tell you an incident about this abbey, one I heard not long ago in my monastery in England. Maybe it will come

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

back to you for a story many years from now, or for your thoughts when you have seen a great deal of the world and life.'

"I came nearer to the monk so that my hand rested on his big brown garment; and I leaned my arm agin the stone bench, and it's the young heart o' me that was full enough o' the wonder.

"'A long time ago,' says he, 'Matthew, my little man, one of the monks fell asleep in the big library, and when he awoke it was the dead o' night. And there before him, right across from him in the great room, was somethin' like a shadow, but dressed just like himself in brown and white, and this strange thing was gropin' about at the shelves, takin' down one book after another, and lookin' in it, and thin puttin' it back into its place. The white splendor o' the moon fell into the room through the big windows, makin' it as plain almost as the day.'

"He turned and pointed to one of the

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

highest arches, and says he, 'I think that was one of the windows.

"'Well,' says he, goin' on when I looked back at him, 'the apparition filled the Brother with all kinds of surprise. He did not know what to say or do, seein' the strange figure opposite to him, just like a thick kind o' mist, in brown and white, and the hood drawn so high he could get no sight o' the face.

"'In the mornin' he thought it better not to tell the Abbot, but to wait and go himself again to find out if he was really awake the night before. And sure enough, the next night and the next again, didn't he go and see the self-same thing, the silent shadow o' a monk dressed just like himself, goin' to this shelf and to that, and takin' down the books and lookin' in them, and puttin' them back, and then goin' away as if disappointed, for the high hood would be turned back towards the shelves and the books, as if longin' to look into them again.

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

“‘So after three nights o’ this, the Brother reported to the Abbot all that he had witnessed, and the Abbot went himself to watch that night in the library. He said nothin’ about what he saw, but I suppose it was much the same as the Brother had spoken of. Anyway, in the mornin’ he sent for the librarian, and they took down all the books, examinin’ them very carefully, one by one. And sure they found in one o’ them a bit of writin’, slipped in among the leaves on a bit o’ a card, and it told of an offerin’ that was made to have five Masses offered for a special intention.

“‘The Abbot called five o’ the Brethren thin and there and asked them if they could each offer up a Mass the very next mornin’ for a most special intention he had in mind. And they said they could, all but one who had an urgent intention of his own. And then the Abbot asked another who was able to consent.

“‘So the Holy Masses were offered up

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

here within these walls, accordin' to the Abbot's wishes. And that night he went again to the library but he saw no trace or tidin's of the stranger that had been comin' there before, nor ever after that.

“‘And, Matthew, my little man,’ says he, ‘it’s a true story I’ve told you.’”

But old Mat could not tell me any more on that evening. Out in the hallway was the high sound of merry voices, the visitors coming to spend the Hallowe’en with us, and my little brothers and sisters running gleefully across the room to meet them. I stood up, hoping to draw Mat aside till I could hear more of the strange tale, especially of the monk who had visited Athenry to offer up five Masses. But the animated talk of the young people took our attention. Mat arose and started towards the visitors to give them greeting. But first, he took me by the arm and whispered, “God rest the poor souls that are gone, Robert, astore.”

Later in the evening I found a chance to

THE PLACE OF PURGATORY

steal away to my room, and there I sat down to ponder upon the old man's story, trying to see my way into some of its meaning, as doubtless it appeared a plain thing, full of understanding to Mat Magrath. My mind first looked for the question that had started the narrative, and I recalled that he had asked me about the place of Purgatory. But I could get no farther with my thoughts, for a call from the young folks brought me back to help them at their games.

DASEY

I

THE BROTHERS

ABOUT three miles west of the District of Columbia, on a road that runs parallel at times to the Potomac River, is the Montevista Insane Asylum. The huge building with its flat, expressionless facade is perhaps the most dismal-looking object along the picturesque road; but using a right that belongs to poverty or wealth indiscriminately, it enjoys the beautiful view of the wooded hills on the Virginia shore across the river. Rows of catalpa and beech trees line the avenue that leads back to Montevista. And here on every pleasant afternoon in summer, the white inmates of the institution are brought out for an airing; the negroes, whose quarters are in a squatty building at the rear, recreate in a sandy yard in the shade

DASEY

of their house. If you stop at the gateway to look up at the bleak asylum, the chatter and the antics of the poor demented beings may reach you; some of them imagine that they are wild animals prowling about a dark forest, and others that they are kings and queens seated upon royal thrones.

Among those who had free access to the grounds and wards of the institution, under the title of workers for the inmates, were two students from Georgetown College. They were deputed by the College conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, with the approbation of the Rector, to visit Montevista on Sundays and any holiday afternoon. To the persons they were allowed to see, the few Catholics in the building, they read a few pages out of a devotional book or talked according to the needs of the occasions. Every Sunday afternoon they gathered their few charges into a little chapel and recited the Rosary with them and sang some simple hymns and read a chapter out of a Gospel or

DASEY

of the Imitation. One of the Fathers of the Faculty at Georgetown managed to offer the Holy Mass at Montevista about once a month; and at other times he came whenever there was a call to attend a sick person.

The two collegians, from being seen assisting the priest, and from their own little efforts towards charity, were called Brothers by the officers of the house and by those of the inmates who were able to recognize them. Delaney was the senior of the two; and being a member of the football and baseball teams at Georgetown, an athlete, therefore, of muscle and nerve, he usually visited the worst wards and went among sights the most harrowing. His only reason for looking in at these places, since he could have no human speech there, was to report to Father Keenan at the College on the physical condition of the few Catholics. Father Keenan in his priestly zeal wanted to know of any proximate approach of death there.

The other St. Vincent de Paul visitor was

DASEY

Dalton. He was far from being a compeer of Delaney in muscular strength and for that reason the Rector had advised him to remain in the quieter parts of Montevista; the strain upon his nerves from the excruciating sights might be too trying. But Dalton had much musical talent; and after he finished his work with his section, he would assemble the harmless children into one of the rooms, and play a piano for them, singing little nursery rhymes for them, much to the pleasure even of the headwarden's family. The day before the Christmas vacations began, Dalton brought a quartet from Georgetown and had them sing carols for various groups at Montevista.

Delaney used to congratulate Dalton on the work he was doing, but the compliments would be turned off with the remark, "Mine is a kid glove affair, Del. You have the real job. Think of the poor fellows that you try to help."

"Yes, try to help," repeated Delaney.

DASEY

"Very few of them can distinguish between an act of kindness and one of hostility. Only that some of them, I mean the Catholics over there, associate us somehow with Father Keenan, I think they would have very little regard for us. They've got a dummy notion that we are some kind of Brothers. That passes us." Delaney smiled and grasped Dalton's arm, saying, "I'm your Brother Delaney."

But one Sunday afternoon at the end of May, when Delaney returned to the chapel, where Dalton and his singers were waiting, he was without his usual look, the jolly, good-natured face that was customary with him except when his muscles were drawn hard in a football rush or when he faced the pitcher on the ball field. Dalton and his comrades noted the strange pallor over Delaney's countenance, and his wide staring eyes. They walked towards him; and Gannon, one of his singers, asked, "Have you seen a ghost, Del?"

DASEY

Delany rubbed his hand across his face and then through his hair and blinked his eyes for a few seconds. He glanced towards Dalton and tried to appear composed. "I say, fellows," he spoke in a strange, low tone, "I saw a pretty hard case up in Ward C a few minutes ago. He's a new arrival, came yesterday from the penitentiary. He's a raving maniac, a terrible sight, bound in big irons, not more than two inches given his head to move."

"How did you get to see him?" asked one of the group.

"I looked over the list and saw his name. It's Dasey; and I thought from the name he was a Catholic. So the warden allowed me to see him."

The sight of the man in his irons and cell must have been awful, for it struck deep into Delaney's feelings. He stood motionless, as he stopped speaking and turned with a stare towards the door. Dalton took him by the

DASEY

arm and said, "Let's move; only got an hour to get back to the College."

The little group walked out towards the avenue. When they reached the obscurity of a beech tree Gannon took his pipe from his pocket and lit a match; but he quickly flipped it to the ground and stepped on it and then moved over to Delaney. "Say, Del," he asked, "do you think we could get a look at the man?"

"Some other time," was the answer. "It would not be just right for us to go up and stare about there."

They walked on without any talk till Gannon broke the silence by asking, "Why, Del, do they object?"

"No; at least they always treat us considerately. But I think that Americans do altogether too much staring." Delaney noticed the smiling faces about him. "I know that sounds big, but it's true. America is just a big circus tent, and we all want to take

DASEY

in the whole show. Why, even girls who call themselves respectable go nosing around the dirty slums of cities."

"Rubber necks, hey?" Dalton sang out, a bit of slang current at the time.

The others laughed and applauded Delaney's little preachment, saying, "Good boy, old Del."

"But say, Morrie," he added, turning to Gannon, "this isn't for you. I merely meant to say that I'll take you up some other time. And besides, you know the Rector does not want many of us to go into the real crazy wards."

A week later Gannon went up with him to Ward C. Father Keenan had also been to Montevista, and though he was not a man of strong physique, he had the intrepid heart of a true soldier and held back from no pass, however perilous, where he might find the post of duty. He paid a visit to Dasey's cell, but the poor maniac was in too dreadful a condition to receive any ministration.

DASEY

The warden walked away with Father Keenan and said, "He's a terror, sir. He must have had a bad career. He swears sometimes like streak lightning."

Father Keenan turned and answered the warden very gently: "But the swearing is not necessarily from habits he had when sane. He may have been a very good young man, of a decent and virtuous family and surroundings; may never have indulged in profane language before in his life. His swearing now may be due to other causes. For instance, has he not been in a penitentiary?"

"That's right, sir," came the answer, "and there's some pretty tall cussing goes on there."

"Anyway," the priest went on, "Dasey has not control over his speech now, and you will—"

Before he could finish his sentence, a wild yell, followed by a volley of terrible curses, rang down the corridor. Father Keenan removed his hat and stepped back towards

DASEY

Dasey's cell, much to the surprise of the warden who thought that the lunatic's profanity would shock the clergyman and make him hurry away from the place.

Father Keenan quietly placed his hands on the bars and called in a low voice, "Dasey."

The man was struggling to break loose from his fetters, but they held him with more than ten times his own strength. Again, at a moment when the yelling ceased, the priest raised his hand as if for a blessing and whispered, "Dasey." The poor man seemed to catch the word. He looked up at the door and stared wildly at the priest; then he hung his head and became silent and motionless.

Father Keenan walked slowly away and remarked to the warden as he reached the stairs, "Don't think unkindly of the fellow, and don't blame him for the swearing."

When Father Keenan reached Georgetown he sent for the boys and told them to

DASEY

watch the condition of Dasey. "I do not know about his religion, but the name suggests a Catholic. Let me know if you get any sign from him."

"Sure enough," answered Delaney, "the name sounds Catholic. But I knew a Protestant Dasey in Brooklyn, a real Protestant." He raised his tone and gave a little laugh. "He had the cut of it; a very nice fellow, wore a Vandyke beard and had a Boston twang; but he looked funny to us, like a fish out of water. And that name,—Dasey! It would have seemed better if he made it Dacer or Daisy."

Dalton was laughing merrily when his comrade's speech was ended.

"That's straight goods, Dalt," said Delaney assuringly.

Father Keenan smiled at the emphasis, and then said, "Well, keep an eye on Dasey's state and let me know. I hope he will not take a more wretched turn while you are away during the summer vacation. Some

DASEY

of the Fathers will look in there during the summer. But Dasey can not last long in his present condition. He refuses to take food, and thus far they have been able to force only a little on him."

"Well, if he was accustomed to other diet, I can easily understand," said Delaney with a shiver through his entire body, at the thought of Montevista's eatables. "I declare the hardest thing at that place is the awful smell of the food, that and the reeking odor of washed floors that never seem to dry."

The priest merely repeated, as he was leaving the boys, his request to watch for any sign that might indicate that Dasey was a Catholic. "I do not think that he will last much beyond next October."

DASEY

II

IN A STORM AT SEA

Toward the middle of September when Delaney and Dalton returned to Georgetown and were reappointed to their portion of the St. Vincent de Paul work, they hurried away to Montevista on the first free day to look after their charges.

It was a pleasant day, sunny and warm; and many of the inmates were out with their keepers under the shade of the trees. Delaney touched Dalton's arm when they reached the avenue, and motioned him to take a long look at the scene. The fields round about were no longer bright and fresh as in June. Withered tufts of grass and drooping hedges suggested death in many places. Flower urns with confused clusters of parched plants seemed weary with sickly

DASEY

decay. Brilliant blossoms of the sage shone in a corner of the garden, but their color, in the general scene, looked like the flush of sickness on the cheek of a child. A few robins, whose breasts were no longer bright red as in the springtime, flew down to the sere grasses and looked about for a minute; then, as if they were fleeing from some blast of pestilence, they took wing and sped away towards the south, voiceless and desolate, though the air was warm and the sun shone brightly. Dead and crumpled leaves fell occasionally from the catalpas; and the brown, withered leaves that clung tenaciously to the gray boughs of the beeches rustled mournfully in the breeze. Tall white tassels of the large garden grasses waved like bony, colorless hands of ghosts in a drama of death.

The groups of insane men made part of the dreary picture. Nature, dying and withering away, was a background for this portion of humanity. Here were only stalks

DASEY

of men; emaciated faces; eyes out of which no beam of intelligence came; muscles and nerves that were cut off from the free will; tottering figures that still obeyed some laws of life and clung unconsciously to health, like the brown leaves holding to the beeches, though the sap of the tree no longer reached them. Yet miserable as they seemed to the human eye, segregated from the great world beyond these walls, imprisoned for the safety of society, these men were still in the hands of God; He was yet their loving Father.

This was a thought that came to Delaney, young man of the world that he was. He folded his arms, and said, as he looked more intently at the scene, "Do you remember what the Rector told us in his address the other day, Dalt? One thing struck me rather forcibly and comes back to me now as I look at these poor fellows."

"What was it?" asked Dalton.

"Some saint, Francis of Sales, if I remember the Rector right, once said that he would

DASEY

prefer to be on a stormy sea at night, in a frail boat without oars or rudder, at the mercy of the winds and waves and lightning, rather than be on the safe land within a few paces of his house door. For then in the peril of the midnight storm, cut off from all human aid, his safe keeping would be entirely the affair of God. Life or death to him then belonged directly to the providence of the Heavenly Father. Whereas if he were stationed on land, he must shift for himself, still having, of course, the constant help of God, but depending on his own efforts to the utmost to keep from danger."

Dalton was not a person to make light of his comrade for quoting a sermon. Indeed there were few of the Georgetown students, even at the medical school where Delaney was following courses in biology, who would not listen to his earnest talk always, whether he spoke on the athletic field or in the "quad," or at a debate.

Delaney turned towards Dalton again to

DASEY

finish his observations: "Well, Dalt, those poor fellows seem to be in the condition such as the Saint preferred; out on a stormy sea, away from all human help. Think of it, no word of ours can reach down into their souls; their wills are without oars and rudder; no eye can look in on their minds but God's, no hand reach down into their lives but His. They are out, far out, drifting on a sea by themselves, alone in a terrible storm."

There was true solemnity in every word of this little speech, and Dalton felt it to the full. But he noticed that some of the keepers were looking towards him, and he started to walk up the avenue. "Yes, they are, Del," he said; "but many of them got there by their own doing; they came to that awful condition through their own fault. And that is not to their advantage. Francis of Sales would never think of going into the peril of a storm if he could keep from it. Otherwise he would be tempting God."

DASEY

"There is the dreadful thing of it all, Dalt," answered his companion. "A life of terrible sin brought many of them to this state. Who knows but this is their hell which has begun for them. But the other cases, those who were leading clean, straight lives before,—God will look out for them with abundant care."

His talk might have continued had his attention not been attracted to a piteous-looking man leaning against a tree. The idiotic face was almost the color of the white birch-bark against which it rested; his hands hung limp at his side; his eyes stared hopelessly at the rustling leaves of a tree across the road.

One of the wardens came down to Delaney and saluted him. "That's Dasey," he said.

"Dasey?" asked the surprised Delaney almost in a shout; but his loud voice did not cause the least motion in the corpse-like attitude of the poor imbecile who stood before

DASEY

him. "Dasey?" he asked again, this time in a pathetic whisper.

"Yes, Brother, that's Dasey. He's changed considerable. The confinement knocked him pretty hard. He nearly died about a fortnight ago. But there's lots of kick in him yet."

Dalton walked off towards the building to look after his charges. Delaney very quietly stepped towards Dasey, who was still gazing fixedly on the rustling leaves across the way. His eye must have caught a glimpse of the approaching figure, for he moved away, ambling sideways, still looking towards the tree.

"He never faces anyone," said the guard, "and it's no good, Brother, trying to get him to talk to you."

But Delaney felt sure that he could obtain some recognition from Dasey after a few weeks of coaxing. On his subsequent visits, he brought fruit with him, hoping that, by offering it to the demented invalid,

DASEY

he might have a chance to approach near to him. At first, he stood at a little distance from Dasey, whispered his name very kindly, and rolled a large rosy apple towards his feet. Then he walked away; but when he turned he saw him stoop for the apple and eat it with avidity. On his way home with Dalton, he repeated the action, this time with a big, seedless orange, which he had cut to have it peel easily. By these little kindnesses, he found it possible after a few weeks to step near to Dasey and put fruit or cake into his hand. He talked to him, but to no avail; and Delaney felt sorry that he could get no sign from him about his religion.

DASEY

III

STAR OF THE SEA

One thing out of the ordinary happened, however, on a bleak November day, when Delaney was at the College for a football game with the team from Virginia. Dalton, who went to Montevista with Gannon that day, had read to some children, and then sat down to the piano to entertain some harmless inmates who were strolling in a corridor. Dasey, now grown much feebler, his face thinner and more blanched from the confinement, entered the room and stood as if listening intently to the music, while his eyes gazed at the opposite wall. Dalton noticed him, and after playing through a transition to a key that he could sing in, he gave his

DASEY

best voice to a verse of a hymn that every Catholic child knows by heart.

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean star,
Guide of the wanderer here below,
Tossed on life's surge we claim thy care,
Save us from peril and from woe.
Mother of Christ, Star of the sea,
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

Dalton's eyes glanced towards Dasey, and he saw him move with a more intent gaze towards the white wall. He left the piano and went cautiously to the invalid, feeling that it was an excellent opportunity to reach the poor man's mind. His plan was to take Dasey's hand; and by starting him to make the Sign of the Cross and leaving him to finish it, he would ascertain if he was a Catholic. He lifted the cold limp hand to the forehead and said, "In the Name of the Father."

Dasey, with eyes averted to a corner of the room, unlocked his lips, that had only

DASEY

pronounced curses since he came to Montevista, and said, almost inarticulately, "Name of Father."

Dalton brought the hand to the breast, saying, "And of the Son."

Dasey repeated, "And of Son."

Then Dalton released his hold of the hand and whispered, "And of—," waiting to see if he would go on. To his joy Dasey brought the hand to either shoulder, saying, "And of Holy Ghost. Amen."

A clatter of keys and a shout at the door scared Dalton. The cry was from the warden who saw a part of the scene from the opposite room. "Hey, Brother," came his stern, rough voice, "come here, Brother. That's dangerous." And when Dalton reached his side, he went on, "Don't touch that man. You are the first ever took him by the hand since he came here. He goes mad as the devil if we try to touch him. He looks weak, but he'd take three of us to handle him if he cut loose again."

DASEY

Dalton bowed amiably to the officer, and walked back to the piano and played till Gannon appeared.

When he arrived at the College, that evening, he went directly to Father Keenan's room to narrate the incident. Delaney, who was in the infirmary nursing a bruise he received in the football game, heard the account of the day later, and he said in his good-natured way, "I knew old Dalt would be the one to find out that Dasey is a Catholic."

"But you got him to come around, so that he'd let us near him," answered Dalton, "and you'll do more for him yet."

Delaney laughed the praise away. He had no more to say about Dasey till the day before the Christmas recess began. On that occasion Dalton brought the quartet to Montevista to sing the carols again; and the attention to that interesting work caused them to overlook their patient in Ward C. When the program of music was ended, they

DASEY

had but an hour left to get to the College in time for supper, and they started down the avenue at a brisk pace. Before they had gone far, Delaney stopped suddenly, and turned towards the building, saying, "We've forgotten to take a look at Dasey. Last week he was very wretched, almost wasted away."

As he spoke he caught sight of a crippled figure waving and shouting to them from one of the lower windows. Delaney strained his eyes and turned his ear from the wind to listen more attentively. He thought he heard a hollow voice crying, "Tasey dyin'."

"I'll go back with you," said Gannon generously.

"Go ahead, Del. We'll walk on and tell them at the office why you are late," said Dalton.

Delaney and Gannon walked rapidly back to the building and reached the window where a crippled idiot was waving and calling to them, his eyes filled with a strange

DASEY

mingling of terror and sadness. He cried again in his sepulchral tone, "Tasey dyin', Budder."

The young men did not know whether they should believe his statement, for they felt that the piteous-looking creature before them could not distinguish health from sickness. But he motioned them to the window, and they, lifting themselves up to the sill, saw a form prostrate on an old couch apparently gasping in a struggle with death. They rushed round to the room and found that it was Dasey. The horrible rattle of thickening phlegm was in his throat, almost choking him at every breath.

"Quick, Morrie; run over to the chapel," came the excited whisper of command from Delaney.

"What'll I get there?" asked Gannon, as he sprang to the door.

"Get the candles, and bring a crucifix—you'll find it in a drawer at the right, and a little bottle of holy water. Hurry! I'll go

DASEY

up and telephone for Father Keenan."

He sprang out to the corridor, took a flight of stairs in five leaps, and knocked at the office. "Mr. Ryce, may I use your telephone? I want the College as quickly as possible. Dasey is dying."

While he was waiting for Father Keenan to come to the telephone, the superintendent told him the history of Dasey's sudden decline. "That terribly stormy day we had last week struck him with a cold that turned to fever; and as he got so weak we put him down in that room. It's taking him off quickly. Too bad."

Delaney excused himself for rushing away from the office after he had given his message to Father Keenan. In ten seconds he was back in the room beside the dying man. He lit the candles and placed them on a little table at the foot of the couch. He took the crucifix and gently put it in Dasey's cold hands and closed his fingers tightly on it. Then he raised the thin, fleshless head,

DASEY

but there was no pillow to keep it propped up comfortably.

"Say, Morrie," he whispered, "let's have your sweater." Off came the coat and sweater. "I hope the man will last till Father Keenan comes; he said he would get here as fast as a horse could take him. There." He had fixed a prop under Dasey's head, and the choking rattle in the throat sounded less distressing. With a hand as gentle as a mother's he rubbed his handkerchief over the invalid's brow, and wiped away the congealed white humor that lay near the eyelids and corners of the mouth.

Gannon had brought a prayerbook from the chapel, and at a convenient moment he held it up to Delaney. The latter bowed his head to his companion and said, "Get the page with the prayers for the dying. You read them; I'll stay here and hold his head, and try to help him to last it out till Father Keenan comes."

Gannon knelt at the foot of the couch

DASEY

near the light of the candles, and read the prayers with great earnestness. For a moment he found it hard to keep from being distracted; for two of the demented inmates of the house entered the room and gazed idiotically at all that was going on. One ghastly face with small sunken eyes pressed up close to his shoulder and stared at the book. When Gannon came to the ejaculations for the dying, he read them in a clear loud voice, and Delaney whispered them into Dasey's ear, pressing his hands the while hard about the crucifix.

"Read the Litany of Loretto." Gannon read it, and Delaney sounded the response, "Pray for me," close to the dying man's ear.

As each fervent call went forth, each beautiful title of the Mother of Christ, the patient seemed to become less tortured by the racking gurgle in his throat.

"Say the Litany again," whispered Delaney. And suddenly, to his great surprise,

DASEY

he saw the eyelids part and the glassy eyes stare down towards the candle lights. Delaney lifted up the hands and the crucifix and brought them close to Dasey's face.

"Health of the weak, Pray for me. . . .
Refuge of sinners, Pray for me. . . . Com-
forter of the afflicted, Pray for me."

The head, propped upon the sweater, twitched, and the ears seemed straining to catch the words. Suddenly the mouth moved, and a feeble, inarticulate groan came forth. Then the sound grew stronger and Delaney was overjoyed at hearing the response from the blackening lips: "Pray for me." He bent over the couch and recited the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, and then short sentences of Contrition: "My God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins."

The clatter of horses' hoofs came up the avenue. Gannon turned to the window and saw Father Keenan dashing up on horseback. He flung the window open, jumped out and met the priest, pointing to the room

DASEY

where the man lay dying. In a few seconds the priest was in the room, alone with a man in the shadow of death.

Delaney and Gannon had no word to say as they stood in the corridor, guarding the door. Ten minutes later, Father Keenan came forth, his face wearing a most unusual expression of tense awe and a glow that suggested wonderment and not fear.

"Could he recognize you, Father?" asked Delaney in breathless anxiety.

"I can not tell you anything," answered the priest with emotion, "only this: he made a perfect confession,—a full, perfect confession. All his faculties came back to him: God be praised."

Silence like death fell on the little group and held them for a few moments.

Suddenly Father Keenan broke from the spell and said, "Come in now while I anoint him. You can let these men in, too."

Then followed the administration of Extreme Unction, the last solemn Sacrament

DASEY

that the Church gives to king or peasant, as the doors of death are opening to the life beyond the grave. After the various anointings, the priest read from his little book the "Recommendations of a soul departing,"—those inspiring prayers that bridge over the valley of death and leave the soul commended to a merciful God at the portals of eternity. Prayers there are more efficacious for grace at other moments of life, as at the baptismal font and the Communion rail, but there are no words that inspire the feelings of the human heart and make them thrill with sublime awe like those which are read at a deathbed when the soul is taking its farewell of the house of clay,—the sorrows and joys in the far background, and the Judgment throne of God so near.

Every head was bowed; even the superintendent of Montevista stood reverentially with uncovered head as the priest pronounced the solemn words:

DASEY

“Depart, O Christian soul, out of this miserable world, in the name of God the Almighty Father, who created thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who suffered for thee; in the name of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee; in the name of the Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Cherubim and Seraphim, in the name of the patriarchs and prophets, of the holy apostles and evangelists, of the holy martyrs and confessors, of the holy monks and hermits, of the holy virgins and of all the Saints of God; let thy place be this day in peace, and thy abode in Holy Sion: Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

After the other prayers had been recited, the Father and his two assistants started for the College. The wintry wind outside was beginning to blow hard, shaking the trees into a mournful monotone and rattling the unsteady windows and shutters along the ground floor. The stifling gurgling in

DASEY

Dasey's throat increased and his hands began to stiffen and his eyelids drew close together.

Out on the avenue Father Keenan was telling the two students to take care against the cold; he was sorry that he had not the help of a carriage to assist them home. But shortly after they had begun their long tramp on the road, an automobile flew past them, but not before one of its occupants caught sight of Delaney of football fame. The two were soon invited aboard, and wrapped in huge coats. In fifteen minutes they were turning in from the "newcut road," towards the towers of the College.

Dalton was waiting for them on the porch with a message that had been telephoned from Montevista. "Dasey died five minutes ago," he said. And then taking Delaney's arm as they hurried along the corridor, he added, "Father Keenan told me to say that he might have some news of interest to us after the holidays."

DASEY

IV

THE RIGHT ADDRESS

Delaney, as he came in by the gatehouse on the evening at the close of the Christmas vacation, saw a light in Dalton's room. Gannon at that very moment was standing on the porch, looking intently towards the Potomac, hoping anxiously, as everybody in the College knew, that the river would freeze and furnish at least a week of good skating.

"Hoya!" shouted Delaney, when he caught sight of his classmate.

Gannon peered out through the lamp-light, and then bounded down to the walk. "Hey, that you, old Del? Happy New Year. Hoya! Saxa!" He grasped Delaney's hand and shook it in three different styles of handshaking.

DASEY

They hastened indoors, Delaney being anxious to report at the office, and saying, when he turned in there from the long arched corridor, "I see Dalton is back,—a light in his room. I'll meet you up there, Morrie, in a few minutes."

Gannon waved his hand in assent, and went up to wait for Delaney. Dalton had gone with Father Keenan to visit a suffering family on one of the canal boats; but he returned to his room shortly after Delaney reached it.

"Hoya! Saxa!" he shouted as he caught sight of his companion, and, "Happy New Year, Del."

Gannon insisted on giving the yell again, though Delaney raised a protesting hand; and following the loud voice, several doors banged along the corridor, and several faces appeared at the door, and several other voices joined in the merry greetings in Dalton's room.

"Close that door," said Delaney, his right

DASEY

to command under such circumstances being gainsaid by nobody. "Say, Morrie, pull up that transom, or we'll have a Prefect in here." Then he took out a box of cigarettes, saying, as he lit one, "You fellows know that I am not on training rule now."

When the little gathering of students got down to normal silence, and every available seat was taken, Dalton whispered to Delaney, "Father Keenan had some news about that Montevista business to-day."

"Montevista again!" cried Sidney Marshfield, sarcastic in tone but not in intention. "Give us some news about the ball team, Del."

"Quit it," answered Delaney, as if annoyed. "We'll get at that later. If you fellows knew about the case of Dasey, you'd listen to it."

Dalton waited for a few moments; and not wishing to interfere with other talk which was going on, he drew his chair towards Delaney and began: "You remem-

DASEY

ber that Father Keenan told us that he might have some news for us about Dasey after the holidays. Well, he got it to-day."

"Do you hear that, Morrie?" Delaney turned to Gannon and spoke in a triumphant way.

Gannon understood the meaning of the question, and replied, as if to defend himself, "Well, I did not say that Dasey was not really sane when he made his confession. I merely remarked that the people of the world would hardly believe it even if the priest said so."

Gannon's seeming protest brought the entire gathering round to silence. Marshfield especially cocked up his ears at what was mysterious talk to him, and jumping from the window sill, he pushed over to Gannon, asking, "What are you giving us, Morrie? What's all this about confession and Dasey and turning sane?"

"Sit down, Sid," said Delaney, motioning him back, at the same time handing him a

DASEY

pipe and a pouch of tobacco. "I'll tell you in a few words. Dasey was a crazy fellow at Montevista, crazy for about a year,—was in a penitentiary before that; and just before he died Father Keenan got to him and heard his confession and gave him the last Sacraments. All he could tell us, of course, was that the fellow's mind had come back to him, so that he was able to make a good confession."

"And all I said," Gannon broke in, "was this: that we had only the word of the priest about the matter. I said that it would be hard to get a doctor to believe that a man who had been so far gone in insanity as Dasey was should suddenly recover his reason just before dying."

"And I said," Delaney spoke emphatically, "what did I care about the opinion of a doctor or of ten doctors who were not there in comparison with that of a priest who was very much there. What do you think a priest is anyway? Hasn't he as much com-

DASEY

mon sense as any other healthy man? And has he gone through long years of study for nothing? And what do you know about those studies? And what about the power a priest gets from the sacrament of Holy Orders and the mission that goes with it?" Delaney's questions came rapidly.

"Keep it up, old Del. Hoya, for old Del!" cried his listeners, waving and applauding gleefully.

"Quit it, or we'll adjourn," he said with a smile. "I want to hear Dalton."

"So do we," came the chorus of voices.

"A back seat for Gannon," cried Marshfield, pulling him towards the window.

Dalton gave the account which they were so anxious to hear. It was told in a simple and straightforward manner, without any attempts to amplify details or to play upon emotions that might easily be aroused and affected by the matter of the narrative. More than once, feeling the pathos of some turn in his story, he stopped to say, "I think

DASEY

you ought to get Father Keenan to tell about that part."

Father Keenan, Dalton went on to say, had received the address of Dasey's home, after the poor fellow made his confession. He wrote a letter to that address, telling that Dasey had died near Washington, fortified with the last Sacraments. He did not give the circumstances of the residence at Montevista, but merely tried to console them with the statement about his dying in a holy manner, and then he added that the body was interred in the Catholic cemetery near Georgetown.

"I think all you fellows will admit," Dalton looked up at his audience, "that the letter was a very wonderful one which Father Keenan received in reply to-day. It came from a good woman who acts as a nurse to the only remaining member of Dasey's family, an invalid sister."

"Did he tell you where they live?" asked Gannon abruptly.

DASEY

“Good heavens, Morrie,” said Delaney, turning on him with seeming indignation; “what do we want to know that for? Of course the priest would not tell that.”

“Well,” Dalton went on, “this sister is a very great invalid. She can not walk about. The nurse must be with her nearly all the time. The father was quite wealthy and provided for his daughter’s care. The nurse said that Dasey got in with a wild gang at the high school in their city and had run away from home. He never sent word back concerning his whereabouts, though the old father had often made inquiries for his son. The little invalid sister never let the thought of her brother out of her mind.”

Dalton hesitated in his speech at this point, as if weighing the matter or the manner in which he should go on. He had reached one of the points in the narrative which he thought they ought to hear from Father Keenan.

DASEY

"Let's hear it, Dalt," called out Marshfield in a tone somewhat excited.

Dalton waved a hand good-naturedly and went on. "This invalid sister used to pray hard every day for her brother. She prayed that he might come home, or, if that were not granted, that she should hear before her own death, that he had died with the priest by his side and with the blessedness of the last Sacraments. One of her prayers or rather one of the ways she prayed for her desire was very touching. On every Good Friday afternoon, since her brother went away, she used to have the nurse wheel her to the foot of the hallway stairs, and then place a crucifix at the head of the stairs. Then the poor suffering girl would be taken from the wheel-chair, and she would spend the time from noon till three o'clock climbing up to the foot of the crucifix, going up slowly and slowly in great pain, crawling up as if to Calvary. And when she reached the Cross she would pray fervently for her brother

DASEY

and especially that he might have the grace of a happy death. And when last Advent came, she began a new manner of praying for the same intention,—that is, she had a little Crib built in one of the rooms, and twice a week she would crawl along from her room to the little Crib and there make her ardent prayer again.”

Dalton stood up as if to say no more. His voice was not as steady as a young man of his years wants to have it when he is speaking, even if he is telling an incident that may be pathetic; and again Dalton felt that his eyes were not without a suspicion of tears, and he did not care to have them observed in that unusual condition. He was affected, too, by the solemn silence of his young comrades and the inquiring faces which they turned to him. So he waved his hand and smiled, as if to break the serious-minded spell.

“But that isn’t all, is it, Dalt?” asked Marshfield with supplication in his tone.

DASEY

"I guess you'd rather hear the rest from Father Keenan," answered Dalton.

"You've told enough for me and a few thoughts that I will have," said Delaney, rising also and moving towards the door. "And I think that the fact of the right address from Dasey ought to prove to a half dozen doctors who were not there that the poor fellow was sane, as Father Keenan said."

Gannon caught the import of this last statement and spoke up, "I give in, Del. I'll have a few thoughts myself about the matter, I hope."

"But you haven't told us if the prayer was answered," said Sidney Marshfield, taking Dalton's arm.

"I am going down to my room," Delaney spoke to Marshfield. "Come along, Sid, and I'll tell you how it was answered."

The two moved out into the corridor, waving to their companions. The others

DASEY

remained in Dalton's room till they had heard from Gannon all about the circumstances of Dasey's death.

**THE MESSAGE OF THE
BURGLAR'S LETTER**

TO see visions and to dream dreams, after the manner of a great Scriptural prophecy, may belong to the experience of only a few privileged men; but the heart of a child will, nevertheless, continue to possess to the end of time its own faculties for glowing romance, indulging them with vistas beyond the ken of more prosaic people, insisting on seeing the common objects of every-day life encircled with the variegated halo of hope.

Such a heart did little Eva Brant possess; and Eva had no thought of parting with it, even after she had been graduated from the grammar school in Stockwood, returning homeward by her mother's side along a plain country road. The bed of the road was of ordinary clay, and brambly hedges flanked it on either side; even the occasional flower-beds, in little, unkempt

THE MESSAGE OF

lawns, seemed tired of their efforts to look charming. But Eva did not take these circumstances as prophetic of her pathway to the future. She would carry with her the child-heart that had made her early school-days so brimful of interest, and she would retain, in full vigor, the romantic outlook over the coming years, as she had done at school, seeing some tint of promise on every turn of the road, even taking from the hills that were clad with their autumn grandeur a certain color that betokened the spring.

There was no high school in Stockwood, but Eva's father was able to send her to the neighboring town, Ellicottville, where the Sisters had an academy. Mr. Brant was an overseer in the great quarries at Stockwood, and both he and his wife were solicitous about the talent of their daughter for study; and though they wished to have her develop a practical mind, they did not want to dampen her buoyant aspirations and child-like dreams, of which even a casual listener

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

to her animated prattle might conjecture. Both father and mother were unanimous for the academy, despite the comment of some of the villagers about "the frills and fripperies of extry edication."

Eva and her parents were not Catholics; but Mrs. Brant, after her daughter's entrance at the academy, visited the Sisters and returned with motherly pride and enthusiasm to tell the neighbors about Eva's school and teachers. She knew several of them by name, and she insisted on repeating what Sister Francis said, how Sister Superior welcomed Eva, and how Eva was in love with Sister Bernadette. With a mother's instinct she was quick to discover that the academy would have the proper atmosphere for the mind and body of her child, and that Eva, while allowing her ardent dreams to keep her eyes fixed on the heights ahead, would also be taught to hold her feet fast on the earth, to walk surely and honorably the common roads of duty.

THE MESSAGE OF

Eva was to go to school on Monday mornings and return on Friday evenings, the weekly holiday being Saturday. Her walk to the railroad station was over an ordinary-looking country road, but to Eva on her first morning, going from Stockwood, the hedges and walls seemed the abiding-places of some inspiring spirit. She made use of a "cut" through the grounds of Father O'Brien, the Catholic pastor in the village,—a privilege that the people enjoyed, and one that brought down the distance to the station by a half mile. The path through the priest's property was over a sort of terrace on the hillside; and here Father O'Brien could often be seen walking back and forth with his breviary in his hand. He always saluted the children who passed that way, and if they were in no hurry, he would ask questions about their studies or tell them a short story. Eva, in times past, had often passed that way, sometimes wondering at the book that the priest was always reading. Often, too,

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

in journeying over the circling terrace, she had looked up at the beautiful shrine of "Our Lady," as her companions called it, a charming grotto set in the rocks, covered with myrtle vines and sheltered by tall tulip trees and larches.

The terrace, in the daytime, seemed like a fitting pillow for the gentle sunshine to rest upon. The spirit of peace might there abide free from alarm. Even the winds, when they blew fiercely down the road or across the deep valley, put their fingers to their lips as they came upon the meditative larches near the grotto, and went quietly away, some saying "Whisper," and others, "Hush." And yet, in such a place of peace and solitude, did Eva Brant, in fear and trembling, enact one of the most dramatic incidents in her romantic life. Of that terrible night we shall hear anon.

On Friday evening when Eva was at home again after her first week at the academy, she justified her mother's conclusions about

THE MESSAGE OF

the Sisters and their school, and in the after weeks she brought confirming evidence. Not being a Catholic she had failed to apprehend the full meaning of all the instructions, but she took fast into her keeping the general admonitions and counsels and the excellence they contained for the building of character. Even from the class in typewriting and stenography, which seemed so mechanical and dull to others, Eva learned more than mere facility with the hand and accuracy with the fingers as they plied the pen or drummed upon the machine.

The teacher in this class was a young woman from the city; but one of the Sisters often came in as a supervisor, and while exercising her office would sometimes point a moral lesson from the work in hand.

"You see, my dear girls," she said one February day, at the close of one of these classes, as she stood pointing towards a blackboard on which the teacher had written a story in shorthand, "you see how unintelli-

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

gible those marks can seem to one who does not understand them—mere marks and nothing more. And yet there is a clear, unmistakable message underlying them, the expression of one person's mind to another's, as easy to be read by you who know the signs as if they were printed in the choicest diction. And so may we realize a very great truth in life, a truth, indeed, of great moment to men and women who choose to exercise their rational faculties."

There was a stir in the class, occasioned by the moving forward of several girls. Eva slid over to a seat near the Sister. It was well, as we shall hear, that Eva was so attentive that day.

"Let me explain," said the Sister. "Abroad in the great world round about us, on the hills and in the valleys, near to our eyes and close to our hearing, yes, and still more so in the best books that we read, there are countless messages of vital import, laden with healthful interest, if we would but

THE MESSAGE OF

learn to interpret them and take their lessons into our lives. History, for instance, ought to be as significant as a volume of sermons; but men, unfortunately, while they notice the facts and see them follow in the logical order of cause and effect, look upon them ultimately as enigmatical signs, very much like those crowded marks upon the blackboard. Such men lack what was called of old 'the understanding heart;' for, my dear girls, there is a tremendous lesson for life and character to be taken from the consideration of the great historical events, a philosophy in them that will tell us of a Providence that guides the destinies of nations, a power that rules the rise and fall of empires and of men."

Eva, for a moment, looked bewildered at what was to her a deep thought and marvelous diction. She turned to her notebook to set down a phrase or two that still sounded in her ears. The Sister waited a moment, moving towards the teacher's desk.

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

“And in the occurrences, be they great or small, that come into our own lives,” she was continuing, but speaking more slowly, “we may find similar messages of more personal interest to our weal or woe; through sunshine and shadow, in victory or defeat, in health or sickness, in all the vicissitudes that mark our mortal days—in all these we may read instruction to our strivings after greatness, if we but bring the right mind to them, ‘the understanding heart’ that waits on seekers after wisdom. Then shall we, my dear girls, have possession of a science, perfecting us in all the gifts of character, making life a sacred thing, endowing each of us with heroic qualities, conferring on our spirits a fortitude and a heart of peace that shall abide with us, be our condition in the world about us whatever it may.”

The little moral discourse by the Sister was given in a quiet tone, with genuine sincerity for its only emphasis. Yet simple as it may appear to those who read such things

THE MESSAGE OF

lightly, it was of the soul of an educator, and it would win applause of those who had children for its auditors, as it did of the Brants, when Eva repeated it. She had succeeded in putting some phrases into her notebook; but for the most part it was faithfully written down on the tablets of her memory. It contained much that she had felt in her own childish meditations, in her youthful dreams that were as buds of philosophy to open in great thoughts later in life.

That very night, while Eva sat in the quiet of the study room, the other girls being in the chapel for evening prayers, she wrote in her diary: "Stenography class, shorthand marks on board, clear to those who understand the signs; and similarly, from scenes along our daily journeys, events in our lives, with all the various conditions that attend them—these may solve some problems for the world, may tell us of God and of the meaning of life."

The following Friday afternoon, while

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

she was preparing to return to her home, a storm blew fiercely across the hills and moaned weirdly down in the valley. When Eva reached the railroad station at five o'clock, the cold, drizzling rain had turned to cutting sleet, and the wind whistled madly through the shivering trees along by the banks of the Catapsco. Joyous even in such a storm, Eva entered the waiting-room and arranged her comfortable gray sweater beneath her long storm-coat, and then she returned to the platform to enjoy the wild voices of this February night. Her ears felt the biting cold, but they bore it patiently, hoping for a significant message from the raging storm. But her mental attentiveness was not rewarded with any gratifying observation. Soon the shrieking engine turned the curve beyond the hill, and with much puffing and hissing came to a stop a little beyond the platform. And then Eva's mind was able to construct a plain simile to accompany the scene; for she said, as she

THE MESSAGE OF

stepped toward her car, "It is like a valiant knight in shining armor coming forth to disperse a rioting mob."

When she was seated in the car, her memory began to summon up occurrences of the past week, out of which she might weave an interesting narrative for her mother at home. "The very first thing," she said to herself, almost aloud, "the best incident for the very beginning of my story will be the point that Sister developed at the close of stenography class the other day."

Before she had gone far in the reconstructing of the teacher's homily, the conductor called out, "Stockwood, Stockwood!" and Eva reached down for her valise and packet of books, and made ready to descend. No friendly face loomed before her eyes as she glanced up the aisle, and so she guessed that there would be no companion for her on the way home, through the pitiless storm, up the hills, across the short terrace

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

on the priest's grounds, and along the bleak country road. Only one man arose, as if to leave the train at Stockwood, but he was a stranger to Eva, though she could not see much of his face; for his hat was drawn down over his forehead, and his left hand was held over his mouth, as if he were suffering from toothache. An hour later, after the sight of revolvers and the smell of powder had ended their excitement, Eva wished that she had noted the face of that stranger.

A few moments after the train had stopped, Eva was standing out on the unsheltered platform by the tracks. The warm lights of the cars had gone off into the night, and the valley was in total darkness, saving the dim glimmer of a lamp in the little red station opposite to the platform, and the dimmer signal lights that looked down from a high pole like the eyes of some terrible monster belonging to the storm.

Suddenly she heard the rush of rapid

THE MESSAGE OF

steps behind her, and quick upon them a voice that cried, as if to outdo the raging wind, "Hold up, hold up, or I'll shoot."

Eva, with no semblance of terror or timidity, stood still and waited for the man. A door swung open in the station and the office boy dashed out to see what was the cause of the unusual command.

The man, who had shouted, rushed up with a huge revolver in his hand. Reaching Eva's side, he said very excitedly, "Oh, this you, Eva? Excuse me, I could see only a form in the darkness. We've been robbed. Did anybody run past here?"

He did not wait for a reply. Catching sight of another figure at the turn of the road on the opposite side, he sprang across the rails, calling back to Eva, "Wait here. It will be dangerous to move just now." He lifted his pistol into the air and fired two shots, then darted off in the direction of the disappearing figure.

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

"What's the matter?" asked Eva, very calmly of the boy, when she had reached the station door.

"That's Ed Taggart, paymaster at the quarry; did he say they've been robbed?"

Mr. Kenedy, the station master, appeared, having heard the pistol shots.

"Taggart robbed, you say?" he asked, looking excitedly up and down the tracks, and then towards the road. "This is the train the money comes on to pay the men at the quarry, and Taggart is up against hard times if that box got away from him." He moved towards the road, and spoke to himself: "I knew that some mishap would occur. Why didn't they let the railroad attend to the handling of that money-box? No. They insisted on getting it themselves from the train, and now they've lost it at last."

Some men gathered from the station and the neighboring store, being attracted by the loud shouts and the firing of the revolver.

THE MESSAGE OF

Eva set her face towards the road home, and began to move away.

"Hey, there," shouted the station master. He walked forward and added, "Excuse me, Eva; better to wait here a few minutes till we get this affair in hand. It might not be safe along the road."

Eva bowed to Mr. Kenedy and returned to the waiting-room.

Ed Taggart, in a greater state of excitement, rushed back from his fruitless chase; he waved his pistol and shouted to the on-lookers: "Get your guns and start after the fellow, will you?"

"Tell us what's the matter first," said Mr. Kenedy, as he stepped towards Taggart and held his wrist.

"Why, we've been robbed: five thousand dollars, the month's pay of the men at the quarry. I came down to the train, as I do every month, to get the box of money, and while I was speaking a few words with a stranger who got off the train, the baggage-

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

man put the case of money on the truck and somebody made off with it." He broke from the grasp of Kenedy and shouted wildly, "Get some guns and we'll scour the woods."

"Just a minute," said Kenedy, folding his arms, and looking very coolly at the bewildered paymaster. "What did that stranger have to say? Where did he go?"

"Don't bother about him," came the answer, somewhat savagely.

"Bother about him?" asked the other, in cutting tones, as he moved over to the shelter of the projected roof, "why that fellow is in on this game, you can bet. Where did he go?"

"Nonsense," growled Taggart fiercely, as he buttoned his coat and shook off the sleet. "He simply jumped from the train, took my arm like a gentleman, and asked me to do him a little favor. He seemed very polite, knew me, too, pulled out a gold watch and said, while he held my arm, 'Mr.

THE MESSAGE OF

Taggart, will you be kind enough to give this watch to Jim Laithers, Mr. James Laithers, who works in your quarry?' Then he moved away towards the steps of the car."

"That was his part," replied Kenedy. "He was holding you away from the baggage car; don't you see that?"

Taggart began to realize that he had been duped. "Say, I guess you are right, Kenedy. For, now I recall it, the fellow ran back towards me when the train was slow in getting off on account of the slippery tracks, and he took my arm again, and whispered, while he held me, 'Mr. Taggart, if you can not see Jim to-morrow, will you please have the watch sent to his poor old mother?'"

Taggart sent his hand like a flash into his pocket, pulled out the watch, and perceiving that it had only a polished brass case, he muttered: "I'll pound that fellow's head into a jelly as soon as I meet him."

The station master started to go towards his office. "I'll send word ahead up the

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

road: but that fellow is no fool, and he has very likely jumped the train at some convenient place."

The group of interested country spectators, who had never before heard of such a tragedy in Stockwood, stood around, regardless of the raging storm. Some of them, being workers in the quarry, were anxious to follow the robber under the direction of Taggart. Four of them procured revolvers from the office and from the store nearby, and, in a few moments, Taggart pointing the different trails to them, they hastened away in pursuit of the robber and the box that contained the month's wages of the stonecutters.

Mr. Kenedy, with a lantern in his hand, came out to the platform and spoke to Eva Brant: "Take this lantern with you, Eva. It may be dangerous up the road, as the men may shoot."

Eva accepted the lantern and started fearlessly across the tracks; and in a few moments she had crossed the bridge and turned

THE MESSAGE OF

towards the hill that made the cut through the grounds of Father O'Brien. She could not help dwelling on the cause of the excitement that had been taking place at the station for the past quarter of an hour, but her little heart soon brought itself back to its customary equanimity, and her mind was again in the thoughts of her last week at school, recalling, what seemed to her, the interesting preachment that the Sister had given.

When she reached the turn on the terrace where the shrine of Our Lady stood high up above the pathway, in among its warden-like tamarisks and larches, she waited for a few moments to notice how beautifully the trees were covered with snow and sleet, like the white flowing garments that the altar boys wore in Father O'Brien's church. Then holding the lantern above her head, she gazed intently at the white image that represented the dear Mother of Christ, looking down so peacefully and kindly from the grotto,

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

speaking, as it were, its message of courage and confidence out into the stormy night. Eva did not know what prayers her companions were wont to utter when they knelt before the shrine, but she had her own girl-heart to prompt her, and, as she lowered the lantern, she said, with sweet innocence, "O Lady, Mother of my Christ, teach me how to keep good and to live my life for God."

Suddenly realizing that she was yet far from home and that her tarrying by the way might cause anxiety to her father and mother, Eva swung round to the path. Before she could start again on her journey, a gust of wind swept over the terrace, and with it, a folded sheet of paper blew up from the slippery ground and stuck against the chimney of the lantern.

A childish fancy came to Eva's mind as she glanced down at the paper. "It looks like a letter," she said. "I wonder if it contains a message like the things of which Sister spoke?"

THE MESSAGE OF

Instead of shaking the clinging sheet of paper from the glass, as she might have done but for the fanciful thought that had just entered her alert mind, she reached down and carefully straightened out the folds, resuming her walk, clasping the lantern under her arm. It proved to be something that looked like a typewritten letter, and scrutinizing it more closely, Eva stood still as if it contained some announcement of great importance.

Entirely unmindful of the storm and of further delaying, she fixed her studious eyes on the sheet of paper and at the lines of figures and signs arrayed thereon. For a moment she was on the point of concluding that the bewildering lines were merely the result of an experiment or of some exercise in typewriting; but quickly she recalled the Sister's instruction, that still shone like a beacon over the lessons of the past week; and aglow with the new thought that came to her, she said jubilantly: "These very

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

marks, these figures and signs, may have a message. Why are they arranged in this way? I suppose it is no harm to try to solve them. Let me see, let me see."

Her eyes were fast again upon the page, and carefully they were scanning the first lines.

8 28)) &9)\$ 5" "45 697 4"¢ ¢9×
 47* &8\$3^ 9*36 "5 #&48*3 9* 0483#5' #
 —497*\$

"Now I have the clue," she whispered joyfully, after her intent scrutiny and thinking. "If you hold down the 'figure' key on the typewriter, you will get all this. I wonder if I can tell what letters correspond to these marks." And with all the concentration of her mind, she worked on the problem, taxing her faithful memory to the utmost, as she spelled out the corresponding words. This is what she read from the first portion of the writing: "I will hold Taggart. You grab box. Run. Hide money at shrine on priest's ground."

THE MESSAGE OF

Believing that she held in her hands a communication of one of the robbers to his confederate, Eva very naturally stood in consternation, wondering which way to turn and whither she might go to make the revelation. The nearest house out on the bleak country road was a half mile away; the railroad station was no nearer. Would she remain where she was till some person appeared who would take the news to Mr. Taggart? Perhaps the chief accomplice in this terrible crime was even now hiding behind the hedge there at her side, watching the spot somewhere about the shrine with its burden of five thousand dollars.

Suddenly, while she was standing there in deliberation, a light beamed forth from the lower windows of Father O'Brien's residence, up beyond the trees.

Eva's mind quickly decided upon a course of action. "I can show this letter to the priest. He will tell me what to do, and he is nearest now."

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

She was hastening over the sleety lawn towards the front of the house. Almost breathless she reached the door. In a few seconds she was telling Father O'Brien of the burglary that had taken place at the station within the last half hour, concluding her excited narrative by explaining the letter that she had discovered on the terrace walk.

"You are a brave little girl, Eva," he said very kindly. "Here," he added, as he opened his study door, "here is my typewriter, and you can verify your conclusions while I am gone. I'll get my coat and then go down to the shrine and see if that box is hidden there. It surely would be a splendid place to hide a treasure, up there among the rocks, a spot that would go unsuspected."

When Father O'Brien came downstairs with his heavy coat, he summoned his old faithful servant: "Gabe, harness Glory to the carriage, I want you to drive this little girl home." Then addressing Eva, "Your mother may be alarmed at your delay."

THE MESSAGE OF

It took but five minutes for Eva to transcribe the entire letter, having her eye carefully on the figures and signs, as she struck the corresponding letter keys.

The priest took up the paper, as Eva loosed it from the machine and read: "I will hold Taggart. You grab box. Run. Hide money at shrine on priest's ground. Hole at top we picked out last week. Come back next Wednesday; excitement over then, and we'll get box. Leave Stockwood at once."

The priest hastily buttoned his coat and moved towards the door. "I'll take your lantern," he said to Eva. "And will you kindly answer my telephone if any call should come? I may be needed by some sick person." As he drew back into the room to see that his little guest should be comfortable while he was gone, he remarked to her, "Those men seem to have planned well. They have been studying the locality very minutely. For all their painstaking, this

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

letter was lost by one of them, and let us hope it brings their evil-doing to no success."

He had gone but a minute or two, though to Eva it seemed like a quarter of an hour, when the telephone bell rang, and Eva was taking this message, having first told the caller that Father O'Brien was out of the house but would return soon: "Tell Father O'Brien that the quarry wages were stolen to-night and there is a reward of five hundred dollars for the person who returns the money; another five hundred if the burglars are caught."

Eva hung the receiver on its hook and went towards the fireplace. To her amazement the door opened, and her brother Willie, her senior by two years, stood smiling in the hallway. Eva ran towards him, and in her natural manner, though now more impetuous from the tragic half hour that she had passed, she threw her arms about him, almost confounding him with her voluble

THE MESSAGE OF

questions about home, and finally, "How did you come here?"

"Why, mother sent me down to meet you," he answered with a boy's air of non-chalance; "and as I was passing the shrine the priest called me and told me to come up here to you."

Willie was let into the great secret of the hour, but the narration was not long. Father O'Brien had no difficulty in locating the stolen treasure, and he returned to the house directly, saying, as he placed the box under the table, "That looks like the precious package."

He drew down the curtains over the windows so that no inquisitive person might look in on the group; then placing chairs near the fireplace, he said, "Sit down here, children, till Gabe comes with the carriage."

Eva, before taking the chair, gave the telephone message.

"That is good news, Eva," the priest replied. "The reward is yours."

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

"Oh, but you found it," she answered with her bright voice.

"Then, if that is your argument, I hold that the prize is yours." Father O'Brien was smiling at his make-believe controversy, raising his hand and shaking a forefinger, as if to settle the argument by his emphatic gestures. "And this is how we shall proceed," he went on, drawing his chair toward the two children. "Tell your father to return in the carriage. I will hand the box over to him. The matter and manner of catching the thieves next Wednesday night I will leave to him."

"Are you going to telephone to the quarry that the money has been found?" asked Eva.

"That announcement ought to be made carefully and not hastily," he answered. "You understand that the burglars will have ears to the ground, and the winds, too, and if they learn that the money has been secured, they will not honor us with their

THE MESSAGE OF

company next Wednesday. So we shall leave this question to your father."

While the little group was sitting by the blazing fire, waiting for the arrival of the carriage, the talk was directed towards Eva's school. It required no great effort on Eva's part to bring up the Sister's discourse, now that it seemed so effective to her.

Father O'Brien listened with delight to the revelation of character which the little schoolgirl manifested. The crunching of the carriage wheels outside on the sleet-covered roadway hindered him from explaining the higher meaning of the Sister's words.

He arose and took two books from a shelf, and said to Eva, "Here are the histories of two very remarkable women whom you must know, for their careers will help your own life. One is called 'Margaret of Orleans,' who was a simple, unlettered Irishwoman, who could not read nor write, and yet she was able to understand signs of her own. She lived and worked in New Orleans, car-

THE BURGLAR'S LETTER

ried on gigantic undertakings there, as if she were a trained financier; and some day, Eva and Willie, if you go to New Orleans, you will see her statue that is now in one of the public parks. And this other book is of the little maid of the historic Orleans in France. This is the life of Joan of Arc, who received messages in a far different manner, who, though a little peasant girl, led on great armies to victory, and saved her country, though she died a martyr's death.'

He placed the books in Eva's hand and added, as he walked towards the door, "You will first show these books to your mother, and ask her if you may have them."

A few minutes later he had seated the children comfortably in the carriage. "I will wait here for your father," he said, as he turned towards the house.

They waved their hands to him and called out, "Good-night, Father."

**NORRY DONLAN,
BENEFACTRESS**

THEN it's Norry Donlan that is the proud woman this day, Kate; and it's herself deserves the joy of the kind words," said Mrs. Doherty.

She was returning from the "late Mass" on a beautiful Sunday morning in October; and up the road with her walked Mrs. Holden, who was Kate Magrath in childhood days long ago in County Limerick. The women had been talking about affairs at home, and had reviewed all the topics of mutual interest by the time they reached the turn beyond the bridge. Here their pathways parted, Mrs. Holden's house being up the hill to the right. And here it was that Mrs. Doherty stood to have a bit of conversation about Nora Donlan.

"It's the words of the priest himself, I mean," she went on to say, as she noticed how

NORRY DONLAN,

inquiringly shone the eyes of her companion. "Sure it's himself, that same Father Dillon, that said the very words, and myself listening to every one of them." She looked down at the velvet-covered book which lay nested in her united hands; and then, lifting her eyes as if in holy admiration, she repeated her first pronouncement: "And it's reason Norry has to be the proud woman this day, thank God!"

Impressiveness weighed every word of the utterance. Indeed, any talk that had Father Dillon for its subject, especially if it concerned his judgment of a parishioner, was always a sure matter of intense interest to every member of his congregation, and whetted the inquiring faculties of the young and old. It is small wonder, then, that Mrs. Holden now stood spellbound, leaning her hand upon the wooden railing which ran up the hill, attentively waiting to hear all the details of the priest's eulogy of Mrs. Donlan. She bent forward to pluck away some

BENEFACTRESS

furry seeds that her skirt had gathered along the roadside; and, being in the attitude of attention again, she asked: "And what did the *soggarth* have to say, Ellen? Sure you mention it in such a solemn way, it kills me to be knowing it."

Mrs. Doherty drew a long breath, and was opening her lips for the recital, when, at a slight turn of her head, she caught sight of Mrs. Donlan coming along, with two of her children by her side.

"Then here is herself, Kate!" she whispered. "And maybe I couldn't tell you very well now, and she so near, and myself wanting to walk on a bit of the road with her, and my Dan at home waiting for his dinner with the childer."

The two women moved on a few steps, as if to disguise the subject of their present conversation.

"Whisper, Kate!" said Mrs. Doherty, coming towards her companion. "Step over to-morrow night. (Sure it's fine weather

NORRY DONLAN,

we're having, thank God!) And I'll tell you the very words of the priest himself, and how I came to hear them."

Mrs. Donlan approached her friends and gave a kindly salutation. Her face shone with interior contentment; but the two women, with their trained and innate sense of respect, did not scrutinize it. As if in the presence of a superior being (for such they thought her now on account of the pastor's praise), they turned their eyes in other directions,—across the mill-pond or up the hill where the autumn colors glowed in the sunlight, or finally, with kind smiles, down at the children who leaned in loving silence on their mother's arm.

No long colloquy followed; for Mrs. Donlan was anxious to reach her home.

"Sure, my John will kill me!" she said, with a kind smile. "I ought to be having the dinner ready by this time. John has a meeting this afternoon, and the children have the Sunday-school. Father Dillon met

BENEFACTRESS

me and the children as we came out of the door by Our Lady's altar, and, sure, he insisted on sayin' the kind words again."

She bowed modestly to Mrs. Doherty, who, she knew, understood the allusion.

"Then I'll be walking along a bit of the way with you, Norry," said Mrs. Doherty. And, turning to Mrs. Holden, who was starting up the hill, she called: "Come over to-morrow night, Kate,—be sure now!"

Mrs. Holden walked slowly and thoughtfully up the hill, stopping now and then by the railing to breathe deeply the cool, clear autumn air, and to fill her eyes with that delight that comes to every Celtic soul in view of any beautiful scene. And, being in no great hurry to reach her cottage—for her daughters were grown, and would have every household care attended to,—she took time to enjoy the splendor of the morning and the peace that was in her heart. By the time that she reached the graceful larch at the top of the hill, some strains of an old

NORRY DONLAN,

Irish tune came to her, and she began to hum the pathetic cadences. But she had not the breath for singing, after the arduous ascent of the hill, neither was this the place nor the time to indulge her Irish heart in song. She put her elbows upon the railing and leaned forward to look at the picture that lay before her vision.

The mill-pond had the spirit of the day upon it,—restful and bright, basking in the golden sun, reflecting the deep blue of the skies above and the occasional cloud that blew across like a white angel. There was no sound of whirring spindles and clattering looms from the great mill beyond the flume; and the white curtains showed in the windows like badges of rest upon the breast of Labor. Off in the distance, the steeple of the church arose among the pines; and through an opening in the trees could be seen the dark, gray house where the pastor and his curate lived.

“It was the fine sermon he gave us this

BENEFACTRESS

morning," Mrs. Holden said to herself, when she stood there in the quiet of a reflective mood. "And I can't help wonderin' what were the great words he had of Norry, that she can be so proud of them, as Ellen Doherty says." She moved away from the hanging tassels of the larch to get a better view of the priest's house, and then, leaning again on the railing, she resumed her attitude of repose. "Anyway, it's the kind word that is easy for Father Dillon these last years. He's always ready now with the good message and the helpful deed, may the Lord reward him!" Her face brightened as she said, almost aloud, "See what he said to myself,—that he hoped my own Jimmie would yet go to college and do great things."

These thoughts of Mrs. Holden were now the parish judgment on Father Dillon. Young and old alike had marked him for praise and love on account of his paternal kindliness; though they could remember other times when he showed only dispositions

NORRY DONLAN,

stern and severe. Time was, in the younger days of the pastor, when he strove to drive only the fear of God into the hearts of his people, and waited not to inculcate other lessons. He had come to his little New England parish with all the seminary severity fast upon him. There was meagre tenderness in his voice at any speech then. But he was among a people who would sooner cut off a right hand than attempt to judge a priest even in his social dealings with them; and Father Dillon's sternness, which at times seemed the very essence of harshness, met with patience and respectful toleration. It probably lost to him and his work the full esteem and love of timid souls, but it helped to make religion sturdy and vigorous in the others. He had instilled into the depths of their hearts the beginning of wisdom, which is the fear of the Lord.

Then, as the years went past, and Father Dillon's shoulders began to stoop and the

BENEFACTRESS

hair turn white upon his venerable head, he had the large experience of life to prompt his lips to another lesson—to tell his people constantly of the sweet mercy and compassionate love of Christ, who will not crush the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. This now was the doctrine he insisted on—the mercy of God that is above all His works; this inspired his dealings with his loving and devoted flock. The very sermon which he had given to-day exemplified his present character; and even so simple a person among his auditors as Mrs. Holden had noted it among her reflections.

“Sure, when he preached on to-day’s Gospel in his early years,” she whispered to herself, “he used to make us shiver with the fear.”

The Gospel she alluded to contained these verses: “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you shall

NORRY DONLAN,

fear: fear ye Him who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear Him."

"But now," continued Mrs. Holden, as she went on with her thoughts, "he gives more time to the other verses and the way they show the mercy and care of God."

The next verse of this oft-preached Gospel was: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? . . . Fear not, therefore: you are of more value than many sparrows."

And because of this new spirit in the heart of Father Dillon, his influence among his people grew boundless; and his temporal reward, if he valued such a passing thing, increased manifold. Young and old came nearer to him, to make him partake of their little joys and sorrows. The constant demands that he had for parish expenses, especially the school, were met by ready hands;

BENEFACTRESS

and the roads to spiritual perfection which he pointed out found willing feet to travel them. Beyond the counting now was the number of the girls of the parish who had gone to "take the veil" in the convent. And, though he knew that there was plenty of work at home in the diocese for new priests, he was overjoyed when two of his boys came to consult him about their vocations. One wished to go on a foreign mission and the other to a religious Order.

"You will have my best blessing," he said solemnly to them. "And I can tell you what I heard the Bishop himself say at the seminary last spring. We were there at the funeral of one of the old professors, and the Bishop gave a little talk to the young men. In the course of it he said that any of the candidates from his diocese had his permission at any time to join a religious Order. I ought to say no less to those that ask me. And as for myself," he smiled and put his

NORRY DONLAN,

hand on the head of the boy nearest to him, —“as for myself, I suppose I shall end my days in a monastery.”

With the passing of the years, Father Dillon's zeal for spiritual things in the work of the Church increased; and when he had regulated his parish as far as he could, a new plan came to his mind and won all the devotion and energy of his ambitious spirit. He had often noticed a large, unused hotel which stood among broad lawns on a hill at one end of the town. It was an imposing building, and to his eye suggested one thing: It would make an ideal home for orphan children, under the care of the Sisters. For a multiplicity of reasons, it had not succeeded as a hotel; it should, therefore, sell at an easy price, and the proprietor was anxious enough to let it go to any purchaser; and it would not cost much to adapt it to the new purpose.

Father Dillon began an ardent campaign for his new project. He would put his last

BENEFACTRESS

cent into it; some pastors in Worcester would assist him; the Bishop would give his blessing and approbation; the men of the parish would go over there on holidays and attend to the repairs and the remodelling; and many a good person in town would send out furniture and such things to help furnish the place. "And think of it," he said in one of his fervent utterances, his voice being eloquence itself,—“think of it, my dear brethren! A new chapel for Our Lord, where we may come to Him in the morning and evening; where the children may go to speak to Him; where you, too, may be nearer the daily Mass, and then have easier opportunities for daily Communion, as the Holy Father wishes.”

These appeals of Father Dillon for the new convent came just at this moment into the thoughts of Mrs. Holden, and this is the reason for alluding to them here. They were the subject-matter now of the mood that held her at her station under the larch,

NORRY DONLAN,

looking out over the beautiful valley. In her curiosity to know the statement of the priest about Mrs. Donlan, she scanned all the tablets of her memory, dwelling on every item that might answer to her spirit of conjecture.

“That’s the very thing, I’ll warrant it,” she said with assurance, as she moved homeward. “It’s some plan Norry has to help the new Home. Maybe a bazaar or a festival or ‘what not’ that she has in mind to get money to bring the nuns and the poor orphans here. And as sure as I’m alive Father Dillon got word of Norry’s intentions, and he made the great praise of her that Ellen Doherty thinks so grand.”

Mrs. Holden’s conclusions had guessed at part of the truth. But she was not content with a guess, even though it was half of the truth. On the following evening, with her son Jimmie at her side, she hastened across the fields to Mrs. Doherty’s house; and her inquisitive spirit could not be satisfied

BENEFACTRESS

till she was listening to the full history of Father Dillon's golden words.

"Sure, Kate," said Mrs. Doherty, as she drew a rocking-chair towards her visitor, having told the children to look at their books, "it was just like this that I came to overhear it; though it's not one of my blood to stand listening unbeknownst; and I know that Father Dillon left the doors open just so that I could hear what he said. Well, I was down at the priest's house with my Johnnie last Monday evening, and who came in and was shown into the parlor across the way but Norry and her little Eddie! And as soon as Father Dillon came down he noticed her first, the parlor being right foreinst the foot of the stairs; and he stepped in to see her. Then what has Norry to say but her heart of praise about the new convent, and the healthy place it will be for the nuns and the poor childer, God bless them—"

"Sure, didn't I guess that it was about the Home Norry had to do?" came Mrs.

NORRY DONLAN,

Holden's interruption of the narrative, and she smiled with satisfaction at her keen intuitions.

"But you didn't guess it all, Kate," was the answer. "It's beyond you to think of what Father Dillon replied. For Norry went on with her words of blessing on the new Home, the same as we all have to say of it; and she came then to her point. She asked his reverence if it would take much to be a benefactress of the Home. She knew that ladies from the city had made grand contributions of a thousand dollars. Norry said that she couldn't do that much, but she had a hundred dollars that she could spare, please God; 'for,' says Norry, 'the Lord is good, and we have our health. It's only a cup of cold water maybe in so big an undertaking, but we give it in His Name; and it would be a joy to be a benefactress of our little church.'"

"Praised be God!" ejaculated Mrs. Holden, as she brought her rocking-chair to a

BENEFACTRESS

standstill, and lifted a corner of her white apron to her eyes.

Mrs. Doherty beckoned for silence to the children, who were disporting in a corner of the room. Then she turned and resumed her narrative.

“Father Dillon got up at that, and says he: ‘What’s all this, Nora Donlan?’ He made out that he was not pleased; but sure he couldn’t hide the heart of him that was touched by Norry’s words. ‘It’s a benefactress of our little church you want to be! Let me tell you what’s better, before I refuse your generosity. Nora Donlan, you have a boy that is a priest of God, and he’s far away from you, and small is the chance he has to give you the little help and consolation that he might if he were here in the diocese. You educated him out of what Dan earns, the honest man he is; and you are doing the same by the other children. Now then, Nora Donlan, when your boy was ready for the Bishop to ordain him, didn’t

NORRY DONLAN,

he write and say that his heart was set on trying to do something for the poor people far away, that seldom see a priest? And he asked you and his father if you would let him go. You both knew what a consolation it would be to see him now and then offering up the Holy Mass in our little church; and well you knew that you could rightly hope to have him help the children at home. And what did you answer to him? You urged him to go, with God's holy blessing and the care of our Immaculate Mother in heaven, to look after the poor souls who had no priest to give them the sacraments. And he went, Nora Donlan, down to the Carolinas, where he has long miles to go and come, and not much to shelter him when he gets a bit of rest. But, sure, that was what happened to Our Lord. And if Father James was in the centre of Africa or in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, he couldn't do more than he is doing.'"

Mrs. Doherty had to clear her voice be-

BENEFACTRESS

fore she could continue. There were tears in the kind, motherly eyes of the listener; and even the children had left their joyful talk over their books, and were leaning on the table and listening to the narrative.

“And what else did his reverence say, God bless him?” asked Mrs. Holden, when her apron came down from her eyes and was carefully set in its proper place.

“Then he gave his answer to her for wanting to be a benefactress of the Home. Says he: ‘And it’s now you have this other thought in your mind! Well, I am not gain-saying your kind offering, and Dan’s at home. But this is what I have to tell you. I’ll take any little help you give, so that you’ll get the blessing of it; but I’ll not let you think of adding that big sum of money. Keep it in store for your old age, or maybe for the children to be educated. But remember that you have the name of a benefactress, and a greater right to have the name than I can give you, or any donation

NORRY DONLAN,

of money can entitle you to. For this I'd have you know, and tell Dan when you go home, that when you gave up your son to go far away on the mission—gave him up with a generous heart, no matter how big the sacrifice, and told him to go on the blessed work,—then, Nora Donlan, it was not hundreds or thousands of dollars that you offered, but you gave up your own son, a mother's own darling son; and it's not a benefactress of a little parish you are—no, Nora Donlan,—you are a benefactress of the Church of God.'”

Up went the clasped hands of Mrs. Doherty in an attitude of devotion. Mrs. Holden's eyes were wet with tears, as she turned from the gaze of the children.

“Amen,” said Mrs. Holden, as she motioned the young people to their books, and then continued her narrative. “Those were the very words of his reverence, the Lord bless him! And then I thought I heard Norry crying. And why shouldn't she, and

BENEFACTRESS

myself like a child in tears in the room across from her! She stood up and I heard her say: 'The heavens bless you, Father Dillon, for those words! And will you give your blessing to Eddie here?' And his reverence says: 'I will gladly, and to yourself too.' Then I heard them kneeling; and didn't I drop down myself and bend my head for the blessed words?"

A sudden knocking at the front door startled the speaker and her listeners, and they rose up as one of the children hastened into the hallway.

"How queer enough?" exclaimed Mrs. Doherty, as she went forward to greet Mrs. Donlan and Eddie. "Why, then, talk of the angels and you'll see them is true enough. Sure, Norry, I was just telling Kate what Father Dillon had to say to you the other night, and those are the words to be proud of."

"Oh, it's the way his reverence has of speaking the kindness that's in him!" an-

NORRY DONLAN,

swered Mrs. Donlan, in her modest way. And, addressing Mrs. Holden, she said: "Look, Kate! Sure Ellen makes me bring all the news I get of Father James down there in the Carolinas, and I've come over with the letter we had from him this evening." She smiled as she brought forth the letter from its place near her heart.

It was not a long letter, but if it were ten times longer it would have had eager listeners that evening.

MY DEAR, LOVING MOTHER:—I have time for only a few words; for I am to start off, as soon as my horse is fed, for a twenty-mile ride into the mountains. I hope to say Mass and administer the sacraments there. No priest has been in that district for a number of years. Why I write now is to tell you that I had a few dollars which I expected to use as a little gift to you on your birthday next week. But a few days ago I met some poor children—very poor children—in a lonely little cabin on a mountain-side. Their

BENEFACTRESS

mother was sick, and the father can hardly earn enough to feed them. I will not call the few rags they wore clothes. So I gave the ten dollars to the children, that they might get some nourishment for the sick mother. It was small help, I know; but it will go a long way with them. And now you must offer up your birthday gift that I was to get you,—offer it to Our Lord's poor. Maybe if you had it you would want to give it to Father Dillon and the new Home. But you tell him that it went to the poor, after all, and God bless it!

I must be off now. Be sure to give my love to father and to all at home, especially to little Nora. Tell Father Dillon that I am well and happy, thank God! And be sure to ask the neighbors to remember me in their good prayers.

Your loving son,

JAMES.

"Then, it's the prayers we'll say for him this very minute!" exclaimed Mrs. Doherty

NORRY DONLAN

with all her heart. "What fitter time to say them than when I have that letter under my own roof. Come, children," she gave the command to the entire room, "get your Beads! We'll pray for the mission Father away off in the high mountains."

As the children bustled about, hunting in their pockets for the Beads, Mrs. Doherty moved towards the stove and poked the fire.

"Let me set on the kettle to be boiling," she said, "while we are on our knees, and we'll have a cup of hot tea for ourselves."

As she returned to her place near the table, she beckoned to Mrs. Donlan, saying:

"You give out the mysteries, Norry. And who knows, if it's God's holy will, but we'll hear those same words of ourselves some day that his reverence said when he called Norry Donlan the benefactress?"

OLD CAPTAIN

I

MY AUTHORITY

INTERDICTS and excommunications, with all their terrible meaning and pomp of circumstance, are not things of the past, to be read of only on the pages of history. The same power and authority exist to pronounce anathema as in the earlier and more crucial times of Christianity, though most of the great pictures of the exercise of this power are to be found in the annals of those far-off years; you know at least some of them familiarly,—Ambrose of Milan with his hand aloft and threatening Theodosius after the bloodshed in Macedonia; and Henry of Germany in penitential garb at Canossa waiting for Gregory to lift the ban

OLD CAPTAIN

from him. It is the benignity of a Mother that withholds that hand from being raised except in the last resort. Yet the old warning still holds: woe to the man who, *suadente diabolo*, dares to strike a cleric. You have the picture of Henry of England and his Norman knights against the intrepid Thomas of Canterbury.

As a later example there is Old Captain, for instance. Old Captain, as I used to call him, not knowing his true name, was an official, perhaps a head-porter, at the Brookfield railroad station. He was lame. And doubtless you would have thought, as I did, seeing him limping along the platform between trains and baggage carts, that he had been injured in some railroad accident. For it is a common sight along by the railroads to see some maimed person,—a man with crutches at a crossing, a one-armed porter at the steps of a car, the half-blind and the halt, a constant procession of these unfortunates, frequent reminders, as it were, of

OLD CAPTAIN

some disaster that has gone before, and a warning against one that may come while you are on the train.

Old Captain, too, I used to think, had been caught in some switch or had wrenched a tendon of his leg as he hastened across a dangerous track. I had often watched him while my train waited at the Brookfield depot, an old man with long white locks, and a faded coat of blue; "Old Captain," I would say, always so cheerful, even in the rain or snow, limping along up and down the platform on his various errands of duty. Doubtless he has by this time passed out of range of our sight, and we may with due charity tell something of his history, of a circumstance connected with his lameness, a chapter strange enough out of his life. I have my own thoughts about the entire matter, but I will not attempt to force them upon unwilling ears. Very likely you have neither the time nor the temper to calculate about the power of blessings or of curses;

OLD CAPTAIN

you leave the marvels of such things to other and remoter times of the past; your miracles of to-day are the wonders done by steel and electricity, and you may boast that your skyscrapers still stand and yet they are loftier than the Tower of Babel. I can do no more, then, than give you the account of Old Captain as I had it from Mr. Dillon (Paul Dillon, as we called him, when not addressing him), and he is a witness worthy of credibility.

Two qualities give a person's word authority, his knowledge and his veracity about the subject of which he speaks. These Paul Dillon had at all times, or he kept silent. He was no gossip, as everybody in our parish knew; and he was not given to believe every light rumor; and again he seldom spoke to young people (such as I was when he told me this story); and when he did hold a conversation with young or old, he was very careful over even the least syllable. "Think twice before you speak once;" that was a

OLD CAPTAIN

motto written above his desk in the shop where he worked. "Look before you leap," he used to say to children whom he taught in our Sunday-school. And I heard my father say that he never knew of an occasion when Paul Dillon was contradicted for any assertion that he made.

Now it was this sober-minded person, this man of serious and careful speech, Paul Dillon, who told me about Old Captain and the circumstances of his becoming lame. I was returning to College at the beginning of a new term, entering upon my senior year. I had taken my seat as the train pulled out, and I had leaned towards the window thinking to have another sight of dear faces that I was leaving behind, when a voice from the aisle saluted me, and a hand rested on my shoulder. Paul Dillon, much to my surprise, had come up the car to sit and talk with me. Perhaps, I quickly thought, he had condescended to honor me thus because I was now to be counted among the elders, the little

OLD CAPTAIN

village newspaper having spoken of me a week before as a "senior collegian." But I knew, for a certainty, that he did not come up to converse with me out of mere curiosity, to try to discover, for instance, what I intended to turn my hand or head to after my graduation from college; Paul Dillon was a faithful custodian of that direct command of common sense (which my mother used to call the eleventh commandment), "Mind your own business."

At all events, whatever may have been his motive in giving up his chance to enjoy a pensive hour by himself, and come to chat with me, this I remember well, that besides feeling honored, I was kept intensely interested by the earnest, kindly talk of my fellow-townsmen. What was I with my smattering of learning out of books compared with this man who, by years of discipline in character, had schooled his mind to think with accuracy and with kindness and with true large-heartedness; who had, despite

OLD CAPTAIN

many difficulties in his earlier years, trained his speech to a corresponding accuracy and to charity, which, in more respects than one, "covers a multitude of sins."

But all of this is a wide circuit I have fetched to make sure of one point only,—that it was such a person as Paul Dillon who told me the strange history of Old Captain. You may be willing to receive his testimony.

"I want you to notice a lame man," he said to me as our train approached the Brookfield station.

"Do you mean Old Captain?" I asked with an assurance of tone that was meant to indicate my knowledge of the person.

"Old Captain?" he repeated in his grave way and with a look of surprise at the name I used.

"Oh!" I said quickly, recollecting that the term I gave out was an invention of mine. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Dillon; I forgot. Old Captain,—that is merely the title I keep in mind for the lame porter. I have noticed

OLD CAPTAIN

him often, you know, as I go past the station."

"And you have made his acquaintance, perhaps?" said Paul Dillon, looking out of the window, as we came to a stop.

"No, I do not remember that I ever spoke with him," I answered; "but I have noticed that he seldom speaks to people, and, yes, now I recollect that I have marked how attentive he is to a priest if one happens along this way."

My companion was listening, as it seemed to me, very attentively, swaying his head in a solemn fashion, in the manner of one of the judiciary. Then out in front of our window, appeared the person of whom we were discoursing, with bundles under his arm. He hobbled along towards the door of his department.

"He has been lame that way these past forty years," said Paul, with something like pathos in his tone, as I thought. "I remember the day it happened."

OLD CAPTAIN

I looked out again, expecting the Old Captain to reappear and go down the platform. And then being curious to find out something more about my old friend, as I may call him, I asked, "Was it a railroad accident that caused it?"

My companion did not reply immediately. Restraint held his tongue on all occasions, I knew full well, and now if he cared to tell me about anything bordering on the extraordinary, there would be a grave use of words on the part of the narrator.

"Perhaps it was at a switch, Mr. Dillon?" I queried again, trying, however, not to seem too insistent in my curiosity.

"That is what most conjecture would lead one to ask," he answered. "But it was not, it was not, Robert," he looked down the aisle of the car, adding a third time, "it was not an accident on the road."

His eyes continued to search in some far place of memory, while his thoughts, as I fancied, were arranging themselves along

OLD CAPTAIN

several lines, as if to run parallel with prudence, charity and edification. Then turning away from his silent mood, he began: "Yes, I think I may tell you about the circumstances connected with his misfortune,—the old Captain's, as you call him, Robert."

I sat up straight in the seat, put my arm against the window sill, and looked, I suppose, a picture of attention.

"I think your grandfather remembers the day. Your father hardly does. It was about forty years ago. I was an altar boy at the time. And the Old Captain," a smile ran along the lines of Paul Dillon's mouth and eyes at his use of the pseudonym, "the Old Captain must have been about twenty-five years of age. Yes, that is quite correct; he is about sixty-five now." Then, after another of the thoughtful pauses for which he was so characteristic, he spoke again, and still with measured slowness, "I suppose you know from your readings in history,

OLD CAPTAIN

Robert, of incidents when a prelate of the Church fulminated stern threats upon some very offending person, be it prince or peasant. Well, the Old Captain's story is something in line with such things."

I must have made a sign that betrayed my over-anxiety to hear the story, for Paul raised his hand, as if to stay my eagerness, or to wave away any notion I might have had of listening to mere gossip.

"Now, you know that we are not excluded from reading about these historical happenings," he began again. "We know almost by heart the offenses that led to terrible interdicts and excommunications. And I think we can consider with profit to ourselves things of a like nature that have happened nearer home. For instance we may see an example of repentance, and of a sweet life forever after the chastisement."

I nodded my head, assenting to these remarks, and waited in silence for the narrative that was ready for the telling, as I felt.

OLD CAPTAIN

Though my companion spoke so knowingly about the old lame porter, I could not fail to observe that he never attempted to meet the eyes of the Old Captain or to draw his attention towards our window. Perhaps it would have been a hurt to the feelings of the old man, and Paul Dillon was not the person to inflict pain. However, as the train drew away from the station, my historian braced up in his seat and told me the story that had been drawing up in his mind all this time. Even as I tell it to you, I have no other name to put into it than my own title of the person, Old Captain; for when Paul Dillon had narrated his chapter of that life, I was no wiser in the matter of my old acquaintance's true cognomen or surname.

OLD CAPTAIN

II

THE OLD BOY'S COVE

On the borderline of Connecticut and Massachusetts, about a mile south of our little village, a shanty was fitted up by Old Captain for the sale of intoxicating liquors. The house was set deep in the woods, and a winding pathway went back to it from the roadway that crossed the state boundary. Being so placed, the house, "with one leg in each state," as the men used to say, easily ran away from the legal investigators, who from time to time came along and pried into matters there, winking one eye towards the opposite side of the premises.

It is easy to understand how such a place became, after a time, the rendezvous of all the turbulent characters of that part of the

OLD CAPTAIN

country, and a terrible nest of evil. Gambling and drinking were the order of the days and nights, and especially on Saturdays, after men had received their week's wages, the wild revels and boisterous disorder that hung about the shanty became a scandal to the parish and to all the environs. Two elements were, however, vigorously excluded from the scene, young people and women; for, though Old Captain seemed to have lost all regard for righteousness, in his mad attempt to coin easy money, he would not add to the defilement of his soul by allowing boys or women near his establishment. He had painted a sign which read, "The Old Boys' Cove," and hung it on a tree near the road. Some observing wit of the place by means of a knife and a fountain pen changed the position of the apostrophe and gave the sign the devil's epithet in this reading, "The Old Boy's Cove."

Complaints in amplified forms came unceasingly to the pastor of our parish about

OLD CAPTAIN

“the devil’s den,” as it got to be called. And Father Barat was not one to let such a place go unheeded while there was danger to any of his flock from its pernicious influence. Father Barat (I remember how Paul Dillon spelled his name, so that I might not think, as the good folk of the parish did, that it was Barrett) was a Belgian; but from years of association with the vigorous Irish priests of the diocese, he had learned to exercise a stern hand over his people, keeping them, even in the matter of their social life, thoroughly aloof from any communications that would tend to tarnish their faith or morals. In those early days when there was need of extreme and severe measures, Father Barat was not slow to adopt them. I can recall my own grandmother’s stories about “the Soggarth,” as she was wont to call him; how when there was talk of having a moonlight picnic, under auspices that were not Catholic, Father Barat gave warning to his people that he would deal with the rod of

OLD CAPTAIN

chastisement, if any of his flock went to so dangerous a place; and the following Sunday, having learned that three men of the congregation had served on some committee that night, he read out his warning again before the sermon, and he called on the three offenders, not using their names, to come up and kneel before the altar during the remainder of the Mass. And up they came and knelt at the altar rail till the last word of the prayers was said.

Now when Father Barat was fully informed about the evil proceedings at Old Captain's shanty, he sent word to him to come to the house and get a "piece of his priest's mind." But no response came to the invitation. He had good reason to believe that Father Barat would endeavor to put an end to his lucrative trade; it was not law or officers of the law that he would have to face at the priest's house; there could be no system of hoodwinking employed there; both eyes of that inspector would be wide open.

OLD CAPTAIN

And Old Captain was unwilling to lose his hold on easy gold so early in his game. And dreading, too, an encounter with the pastor if he should venture near the church, he absented himself from the necessary Mass on Sunday. He made bold, however, to send in his contribution to the collection for the church fund; but that money and a note came back to him within an hour after the Mass. Father Barat in his few words again warned him about the terrible scandal his notorious shanty was causing, and he added that if he received from any member of his parish during the coming week any more of this saddening information, he would denounce the shanty and its keeper from the altar.

The week wore on; and the following Saturday night was equal to the low standard that had given such a reputation to the "Old Boy's Cove." Some frequenters of the place, not members of Father Barat's flock, heard of the part the priest was taking in the

OLD CAPTAIN

matter of reforming the morals of the "half-way" house and they spoke out their minds to the proprietor about the "tyranny of priests."

"Ain't he as ready to take your money as anyone else's?" they asked with a sneer, thinking that they had hit upon an effective weapon of sarcasm.

"No, he does not take my money," answered Old Captain indignantly; for whatever else might be his misdemeanors, he would allow no scoffing at a priest of God.

But he weakened under a great deal of the raillery that was cast at him during the following days. Yet on the following Sunday, though he feared that the pastor had word of the wild disorder of Saturday night, Old Captain, whether out of a spirit of penitence or of daring, went to the church, and took an obscure seat behind a pillar at the far end of the edifice.

Father Barat, as was his wont when he was going to pronounce some scathing cen-

OLD CAPTAIN

sure upon any public wrongdoing or danger of it near his flock, did not preach till he had finished the Mass. Then laying aside his chasuble, he went up to the little pulpit, read the gospel of the day, and gave a strong exposition of the text upon which he preached. After that he took up the book of announcements (much to the surprise of the congregation, for he had been accustomed to read these before the sermon), and concluding his reading and his commentary on these several items, he began his terrible invective against that "den of vice there in the woods, the open door to sin and disgrace and misery in every form, the half-way house, the more than half-way house to the abyss of hell."

"You know the place I mean," he continued, "every man and woman in the whole country round about knows of the place. It is a public scandal, or I would not be speaking here of it. And this I want to say, now that I have to speak, that though the laws of the state do not seem to be able to

OLD CAPTAIN

regulate the disorder, the laws of God will do so, at least for my people. And here I solemnly say that I will hear of no man of my flock going to that den again. I will hear no more of that; God help the man that goes there from this parish. I will give him a lesson that he will never forget. Yes, if it was not the duty that keeps me here on Saturday nights to hear confessions, I would take my stand out there near that hole in the woods, and horsewhip the first man that is under my charge, that belongs to a hard-working and honest home. Let no man who hears my voice to-day dare go there again. And so for the one who makes a filthy living out of the temptation that he gives to other people, let him beware. Let him beware, I say. I have no more to utter in his regard, for he is beyond the reach of my voice. He has chosen his ways; he spurns our appeals; may God have mercy on him."

After a few minutes Father Barat was

OLD CAPTAIN

walking in from the sanctuary to the sacristy. A white look of pity and dread showed upon the faces of the people, and tears were in many eyes. The sexton noticed Old Captain rush from the church with his jaws set hard, as if in anger, and his hands clutching his hat with a fierce clasp, as if they would hold so at a human throat. Making a sign to two of the men at the door, the sexton went out, and his fear was aroused by the threatening air the denounced culprit wore as he went around towards the sacristy. It was a well-grounded fear, for the man's anger had been aroused by the awful allusion to himself and his place of trade; he was going to confront the priest and hurl defiance at him. Nay, more, beside himself with rage, he was about to strike the pastor though the "robes" from the Mass were not yet laid aside.

"What in the name of—" his tongue did not pronounce the word that came to it;

OLD CAPTAIN

“what possessed you to shame me before all the people?” shouted the wretched man at Father Barat.

The priest turned very quietly towards the man, and raising his hands as if to calm him, he said with a meek voice, “You have shamed yourself, my poor man.” And then with somewhat of indignation in his tone he added, “And I say again, you must close that place; you must live by the law; you must close that den of vice or I will—”

Before Father Barat could finish his sentence, Old Captain sprang at the priest. But the sexton and the other men who had just entered, made fast hold of him. He broke from their grasp, while the priest stood quietly looking on, and rushing forward again, he swung his foot out to kick the white-robed priest. But again the men were on him and pulled him away just before the foot had delivered its blow. They snatched him back with such force that every bone in his body creaked, and it is a wonder that a

OLD CAPTAIN

half dozen muscles were not torn from their sockets.

“My poor man,” said Father Barat, coming forward, and looking pitifully at him; “my poor man, may God forgive you, as I do.” And then with a seeming tremor in his voice he added, “You may never lift that foot again to try to kick another person.”

(I can well recall the agitation that was in the voice of Paul Dillon as he came to this part of his narrative. He was not, as I have said before, a man given to puny feelings of emotion or of sentimentality; and now if he was visibly affected by the matter of his own narrative, his feelings were not without due cause.)

Father Barat motioned to the men to let their prisoner go. Imagine the shock that these spectators must have received when right before their very gaze, poor Old Captain began to walk away, but not with the agile step that brought him on his angry mission. His right foot seemed slightly

OLD CAPTAIN

turned outward, and his leg appeared to be shortened, for he could not move onward without that kind of limping which accompanies the contraction of a lower limb. Every eye in the room followed him with pity. Father Barat stepped forward and was going to take the man by the arm and bring him to a chair. But Old Captain (the dear Old Captain, Paul Dillon called him now), lifted up his bowed head and his face so full of pain and sorrow, and turned towards his pastor.

“Don’t touch me, Father, don’t touch me!” he said, as if his voice was ready to break into sobbing. “Let me go, Father. I’ll come back after awhile. But let me go now.” And holding up his hand, as if to forbid anybody to follow him, he moved out the door, hobbling slowly forward, and scraping now and then his right foot along the grass.

Father Barat whispered to the sexton to follow him without attracting his notice, and

OLD CAPTAIN

to watch for any chance he might have of assisting him. But the sexton did not have far to go. Old Captain, observing that all the people had left the church, stepped in at one of the front doors, and then glancing about to see if he was alone, he went up one of the side aisles and found a secret place behind one of the confessionals in the left transept. There, as the sexton knew, he remained all the afternoon, even during the hour of Vespers. And when the time for locking the doors arrived he came towards the sexton's desk and waited there, a picture of humiliation, till he had a chance to speak.

"John," he said almost in a whisper, "I am not going back to the place." He made sign in the direction of the shanty in the woods. "Here is the key, and I ask you to do me a great favor. Will you, John?"

The sexton spoke out of a full heart of kindness and pity, assuring Old Captain that he would give any favor he could.

"Well, then, John, take this key, and do

OLD CAPTAIN

what you want with the stuff that is there. You will find some money in a drawer. Give it to Father Barat for the orphans, or for any cause he has in mind." And after a short pause he whispered again, "And will you take down that sign, John? And will you see if you can destroy the shanty? Somebody might be tempted to keep the place going. Probably, John, probably, you can burn it to the ground. It's mine, you know, and I suppose I can burn it."

As he moved away, the sexton came after him and taking him by the arm, he said, with as kind a voice as he could bring to his words, "But where are you going?" He had some misgivings about the course Old Captain might take. "You know, don't you, that you'd break Father Barat's heart if he heard that you did not take this little trouble with a good will."

"I'll do the right thing, John," he answered. "Tell Father Barat that I'll come to see him during the week. Tell him, John,

OLD CAPTAIN

that—that—I'm sorry." And a strong young man went out of the church crying like a little child.

OLD CAPTAIN

III

HIS PENANCE

Faithful to his word he came to the priest's house one night that very week, and flung himself at Father Barat's feet, as he came into the little parlor. The conversation that followed was not long; but when Old Captain came out to the street, as some men testified who passed him, he wore that sweet, mild look upon his face which they have who come forth chastened to the very depths of their character by a long siege of sorrow.

The next Sunday a sight was given to the entire congregation that was never forgotten. It was an action that Father Barat would hardly have sanctioned had he been asked for permission. Old Captain took it

OLD CAPTAIN

upon himself to perform this penance. He came to the church door as the people were entering for the Mass and knelt at the head of the middle aisle; and when the Mass began, he went forward and knelt at a side altar. He did not leave this position till, with the other parishioners, he went to the altar rail at Communion time.

No word was spoken about Old Captain among the people during the weeks that followed, but many an eye of kindness looked upon him, and many a blessing thought went with him, as he passed along on his way. A month later our sexton resigned from his office, and Father Barat persuaded Old Captain to take the vacated place. The pastor had often attempted to get him to undergo some medical treatment for his leg. But he always managed to evade a direct response to the kind invitations.

However, when a famous doctor, known throughout the state for his skill in oste-

OLD CAPTAIN

ology, appeared in our village on a short visit, Father Barat went to Old Captain and tried again to bring him round with earnest entreaties.

“Please don’t ask me, Father,” was the reply. “Please don’t insist. I wouldn’t wish to disobey you, Father. But I hope you will not ask this of me.” And then, holding his head down, he spoke with halting words, “I want this favor of you, Father.” He pointed down towards his crippled foot and turned his face away from the priest, as if abashed, and said, with all the feeling of his heart, “I want to keep this as a reminder, Father.” And he walked away, trying to hide the limping.

OLD CAPTAIN

IV

HIS BLESSING

We were approaching our terminal, and Paul Dillon stood up. I was eager for what else might be contained in his story, but I did not care to urge my curiosity. As we went from the train and down the long walk to the street, I learned that Old Captain remained as sexton in our church till Father Barat died, ten years after the incident that happened in the sacristy. He then left our little village to take a position at the railroad station, the place where I had so often seen him. And it is, I hope, a pardonable fault of curiosity that I had when, on my way home for the Christmas holidays, I waited eagerly to see again my old acquaintance with his white hairs and his faded coat of blue.

OLD CAPTAIN

It fell to my lot to have to change cars at the Brookfield station and there wait for the "accommodation" train to my little village. My overcoat collar was turned up against the cold wind; and that together with my black clothes may have led Old Captain to suppose that I was a priest.

He came towards me with as quick a step as he could take, and reached for my valise, saying, "Let me take that in for you, Father."

I bowed to him with a smile and said, "I am not a priest." And I put out my hand to take his.

A genial face looked up at me, lit, as it was, even that cold December evening, with the gentleness and sweetness that forty years of a silent, patient memory had created. His firm hand grasped mine with genuine good-heartedness.

It was this, I suppose, that made me betray myself. For I leaned forward and whispered to my old acquaintance, and my

OLD CAPTAIN

friend forevermore, "I am not a priest yet; but will you not say a little prayer sometimes that I may be one some day?"

Again he took my hand and replied, before he moved away to his work, "Glory be to God, I will. May God bless you always."

PRINTED BY BENZIGER BROTHERS, NEW YORK

251

Benziger Brothers' New Plan for Disseminating Catholic Literature

A NEW PLAN FOR SECURING

Catholic Books on Easy Payments

Small Monthly Payments. Books Delivered Immediately. All
New Copyright Works by the Foremost Writers

Printed from New Plates, on Good Paper, Substantially Bound in Cloth

A MOST LIBERAL OFFER!

The following pages contain a list of the books in our Catholic Circulating Library which can be had from us on the easy-payment plan.

Though the books are sold on easy payments, the prices are lower than the regular advertised prices.

Any library advertised in these pages will be sent to you immediately on receipt of \$1.00.

CATHOLIC CIRCULATING LIBRARY

The Plan for Forming Reading Circles

Dues only 10 Cents a Month.

**A New Book Every Month } Total Cost for
\$1.20 Worth of Books to Read } a Year, \$1.20**

THIS EXPLAINS THE PLAN

You form a Reading Club, say of twelve members, and order one of the Libraries from us.

Each member pays you ten cents a month, and you remit us \$1.00 a month, thus paying us for the books.

On receipt of the first dollar we will send you a complete library. You give each member a book. After a month all the members return their books to you and you give them another one. The books are exchanged in this way every month till the members have read the twelve volumes in the Library. After the twelfth month the books may be divided among the members (each getting one book to keep) or the books may be given to your Pastor for a parish library.

Then you can order from us a second Library on the same terms as above. In this way you can keep up your Reading Circle from year to year at a trifling cost.

On the following pages will be found a list of the books in the different Libraries. They are the best that can be had.

Mail a dollar bill to-day and any Library will be forwarded at once.

BENZIGER BROTHERS

NEW YORK:
26-28 Barclay St.

CINCINNATI:
243 Main St.

CHICAGO:
211-213 Madison St.

**THE OTHER
PLAN**

Or if, instead of forming a Reading Circle, you wish to get a Library for yourself or your family, all you need do is to remit a dollar bill and any Library will be forwarded to you at once. Then you pay One Dollar a month.

CATHOLIC CIRCULATING LIBRARY

Dues, 10 cents a Month 2 New Books Every Month

JUVENILE BOOKS

20 Copyrighted Stories for the Young, by the Best Authors

Special Net Price, \$10.00

You get the books at once, and have the use of them, while making easy payments. Read explanation on first page.

JUVENILE LIBRARY A

TOM PLAYFAIR; OR, MAKING A START. By Rev. F. J. FINN, S.J. "Best boy's book that ever came from the press."

THE CAVE BY THE BEECH FORK. By Rev. H. S. SPALDING, S.J. "This is a story full of go and adventure."

HARRY RUSSELL, A ROCKLAND COLLEGE BOY. By Rev. J. E. COPUS, S.J. "Father Copus takes the college hero where Father Finn has left him, through the years to graduation."

CHARLIE CHITTYWICK. By Rev. DAVID BEARNE, S.J. Father Bearne shows a wonderful knowledge and fine appreciation of boy character.

NAN NOBODY. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. "Keeps one fascinated till the last page is reached."

LOYAL BLUE AND ROYAL SCARLET. By MARION A. TAGGART. "Will help keep awake the strain of hero worship."

THE GOLDEN LILY. By KATHARINE T. HINKSON. "Another proof of the author's wonderful genius."

THE MYSTERIOUS DOORWAY. By ANNA T. SADLER. "A bright, sparkling book."

OLD CHARLMONT'S SEED-BED. By SARA T. SMITH. "A delightful story of Southern school life."

THE MADCAP SET AT ST. ANNE'S. By MARION J. BRUNOWE. "Plenty of fun, with high moral principle."

BUNT AND BILL. By CLARA MULHOLLAND. "There are passages of true pathos and humor in this pretty tale."

THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK. By MAURICE F. EGAN. "They are by no means faultless young people and their hearts lie in the right places."

PICKLE AND PEPPER. By ELLA L. DORSEY. "This story is clever and witty—there is not a dull page."

A HOSTAGE OF WAR. By MARY G. BONESTEEL. "A wide-awake story, brimful of incident and easy humor."

AN EVERY DAY GIRL. By MARY T. CROWLEY. "One of the few tales that will appeal to the heart of every girl."

AS TRUE AS GOLD. By MARY E. MANNIX. "This book will make a name for itself."

AN HEIR OF DREAMS. By S. M. O'MALLEY. "The book is destined to become a true friend of our boys."

THE MYSTERY OF HORNBV HALL. By ANNA T. SADLER. Sure to stir the blood of every real boy and to delight with its finer touches the heart of every true girl.

TWO LITTLE GIRLS. By LILLIAN MACK. A real child's tale.

RIDINGDALE FLOWER SHOW. By Rev. DAVID BEARNE, S.J. "His sympathy with boyhood is so evident and his understanding so perfect."

20 COPYRIGHTED STORIES FOR THE YOUNG

BY THE BEST CATHOLIC WRITERS

Special Net Price, \$10.00

\$1.00 down, \$1.00 a month

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page

JUVENILE LIBRARY B

HIS FIRST AND LAST APPEARANCE. By REV. F. J. FINN, S.J. Profusely illustrated. "A delightful story by Father Finn, which will be popular with the girls as well as with the boys."

THE SHERIFF OF THE BEECH FORK. By REV. H. S. SPALDING, S.J. "From the outset the reader's attention is captivated and never lags."

SAINT CUTHBERT'S. By REV. J. E. COPUS, S.J. "A truly inspiring tale, full of excitement."

THE TAMING OF POLLY. By ELLA LORRAINE DORSEY. "Polly with her cool head, her pure heart and stern Western sense of justice."

STRONG-ARM OF AVALON. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. "Takes hold of the interest and of the heart and never lets go."

JACK HILDRETH ON THE NILE. By C. MAY. "Courage, truth, honest dealing with friend and foe."

A KLONDIKE PICNIC. By ELEANOR C. DONNELLY. "Alive with the charm that belongs to childhood."

A COLLEGE BOY. By ANTHONY YORKE. "Healthy, full of life, full of incident."

THE GREAT CAPTAIN. By KATHARINE T. HINKSON. "Makes the most interesting and delightful reading."

THE YOUNG COLOR GUARD. By MARY G. BONESTEEL. "The attractiveness of the tale is enhanced by the realness that pervades it."

THE HALDEMAN CHILDREN. By MARY E. MANNIX. "Full of people entertaining, refined, and witty."

PAULINE ARCHER. By ANNA T. SADLER. "Sure to captivate the hearts of all juvenile readers."

THE ARMORER OF SOLINGEN. By W. HERCHENBACH. "Cannot fail to inspire honest ambition."

THE INUNDATION. By CANON SCHMID. "Sure to please the young readers for whom it is intended."

THE BLISSYLVANIA POST-OFFICE. By MARION A. TAGGART. "Pleasing and captivating to young people."

JIMPLING'S SUCCESS. By CLARA MULHOLLAND. "Vivacious and natural and cannot fail to be a favorite."

BISTOURI. By A. MELANDRI. "How Bistouri traces out the plotters and foils them makes interesting reading."

FRED'S LITTLE DAUGHTER. By SARA T. SMITH. "The heroine wins her way into the heart of every one."

THE SEA-GULL'S ROCK. By J. SANDEAU. "The intrepidity of the little hero will appeal to every boy."

JUVENILE ROUND TABLE. FIRST SERIES. A collection of twenty stories by the foremost writers, with illustrations.

20 COPYRIGHTED STORIES FOR THE YOUNG

BY THE BEST CATHOLIC WRITERS

Special Net Price, \$10.00

\$1.00 down, \$1.00 a month

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page.

JUVENILE LIBRARY C

PERCY WYNN; OR, MAKING A BOY OF HIM. By REV. F. J. FINN, S.J. "The most successful Catholic juvenile published."

THE RACE FOR COPPER ISLAND. By REV. H. S. SPALDING, S.J. "Father Spalding's descriptions equal those of Cooper."

SHADOWS LIFTED. By REV. J. E. COPUS, S.J. "We know of no books more delightful and interesting."

HOW THEY WORKED THEIR WAY, AND OTHER STORIES. By MAURICE F. EGAN. "A choice collection of stories by one of the most popular writers."

WINNETOU, THE APACHE KNIGHT. By C. MAY. "Chapters of breathless interest."

MILLY AVELING. By SARA TRAINER SMITH. "The best story Sara Trainer Smith has ever written."

THE TRANSPLANTING OF TESSIE. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. "An excellent girl's story."

THE PLAYWATER PLOT. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. "How the plotters are captured and the boy rescued makes a very interesting story."

AN ADVENTURE WITH THE APACHES. By GABRIEL FERRY.

PANCHO AND PANCHITA. By MARY E. MANNIX. "Full of color and warmth of life in old Mexico."

RECRUIT TOMMY COLLINS. By MARY G. BONESTEEL. "Many a boyish heart will beat in envious admiration of little Tommy."

BY BRANSCOME RIVER. By MARION A. TAGGART. "A creditable book in every way."

THE QUEEN'S PAGE. By KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON. "Will arouse the young to interest in historical matters and is a good story well told."

MARY TRACY'S FORTUNE. By ANNA T. SADLER. "Sprightly, interesting and well written."

BOB-O-LINK. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. "Every boy and girl will be delighted with Bob-o-Link."

THREE GIRLS AND ESPECIALLY ONE. By MARION A. TAGGART. "There is an exquisite charm in the telling."

WRONGFULLY ACCUSED. By W. HERCHENBACH. "A simple tale, entertainingly told."

THE CANARY BIRD. By CANON SCHMID. "The story is a fine one and will be enjoyed by boys and girls."

FIVE O'CLOCK STORIES. By S. H. C. J. "The children who are blessed with such stories have much to be thankful for."

JUVENILE ROUND TABLE. SECOND SERIES. A collection of twenty stories by the foremost writers, illustrated.

20 COPYRIGHTED STORIES FOR THE YOUNG

BY THE BEST CATHOLIC WRITERS

Special Net Price, \$10.00

\$1.00 down, \$1.00 a month

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page.

JUVENILE LIBRARY D

THE WITCH OF RIDINGDALE. By REV. DAVID BEARNE, S.J.

"Here is a story for boys that bids fair to equal any of Father Finn's successes."

THE MYSTERY OF CLEVERLY. By GEORGE BARTON. There is a peculiar charm about this novel that the discriminating reader will ascribe to the author's own personality.

HARMONY FLATS. By C. S. WHITMORE. The characters are all drawn true to life, and the incidents are exciting.

WAYWARD WINIFRED. By ANNA T. SADLIER. A story for girls. Its youthful readers will enjoy the vivid description, lively conversation, and the many striking incidents.

TOM LOSELY: BOY. By REV. J. E. COPUS, S.J. Illustrated. The writer knows boys and boy nature, and small-boy nature too.

MORE FIVE O'CLOCK STORIES. By S. H. C. J. "The children who are blessed with such stories have much to be thankful for."

JACK O'LANTERN. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. This book is alive with interest. It is full of life and incident.

THE BERKLEYS. By EMMA HOWARD WIGHT. A truly inspiring tale, full of excitement. There is not a dull page.

LITTLE MISSY. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. A charming story for children which will be enjoyed by older folks as well.

TOM'S LUCK-POT. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. Full of fun and charming incidents—a book that every boy should read.

CHILDREN OF CUPA. By MARY E. MANNIX. One of the most thoroughly unique and charming books that has found its way to the reviewing desk in many a day.

FOR THE WHITE ROSE. By KATHARINE T. HINKSON. This book is more than a story, and it is well written.

THE DOLLAR HUNT. From the French by E. G. MARTIN. Those who wish to get a *fascinating* tale should read this.

THE VIOLIN MAKER. From the original of OTTO V. SCHACHING, by SARA TRAINER SMITH. There is much truth in this simple little story.

"JACK." By S. H. C. J. As loving and lovable a little fellow as there is in the world is "Jack."

A SUMMER AT WOODVILLE. By ANNA T. SADLIER. This is a beautiful book, in full sympathy with and delicately expressive of the author's creations.

DADDY DAN. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. A fine boys' story.

THE BELL FOUNDRY. By OTTO V. SCHACHING. So interesting that the reader will find it hard to tear himself away.

TOORALLADDY. By JULIA C. WALSH. An exciting story of the varied fortunes of an orphan boy from abject poverty in a dismal cellar to success.

JUVENILE ROUND TABLE, THIRD SERIES. A collection of twenty stories by the foremost writers.

CATHOLIC CIRCULATING LIBRARY

Dues, 10 Cents a Month A New Book Every Month

NOVELS

12 Copyrighted Novels by the Best Authors

Special Price, \$12.00

You get the books at once, and have the use of them while making easy payments

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page.

LIBRARY OF NOVELS No. I

THE RULER OF THE KINGDOM. By GRACE KEON. "Will charm any reader."

KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS. By J. HARRISON. "A real, true life history, the kind one could live through and never read it for romance. . . ."

IN THE DAYS OF KING HAL. By MARION A. TAGGART. Illustrated. "A tale of the time of Henry V. of England, full of adventure and excitement."

HEARTS OF GOLD. By I. EDHOL. "It is a tale that will leave its reader the better for knowing its heroine, her tenderness and her heart of gold."

THE HEIRESS OF CRONENSTEIN. By COUNTESS HAHN-HAHN. "An exquisite story of life and love, told in touchingly simple words."

THE PILKINGTON HEIR. By ANNA T. SADLER. "Skill and strength are shown in this story. The plot is well constructed and the characters vividly differentiated."

THE OTHER MISS LISLE. A Catholic novel of South African life. By M. C. MARTIN. A powerful story by a writer of distinct ability.

IDOLS; OR, THE SECRET OF THE RUE CHAUSSEE D'ANTIN. By RAOUL DE NAVREY. "The story is a remarkably clever one; it is well constructed and evinces a master hand."

THE SOGGARTH AROON. By REV. JOSEPH GUINAN, C.C. A capital Irish story.

THE VOCATION OF EDWARD CONWAY. By MAURICE F. EGAN. "This is a novel of modern American life. The scene is laid in a pleasant colony of cultivated people on the banks of the Hudson, not far from West Point."

A WOMAN OF FORTUNE. By CHRISTIAN REID. "That great American Catholic novel for which so much inquiry is made, a story true in its picture of Americans at home and abroad."

PASSING SHADOWS. By ANTHONY YORKE. "A thoroughly charming story. It sparkles from first to last with interesting situations and dialogues that are full of sentiment. There is not a slow page."

12 Copyrighted Novels by the Best Authors

Special Net Price, \$12.00

\$1.00 down, \$1.00 a month

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page.

LIBRARY OF NOVELS No. II

THE SENIOR LIEUTENANT'S WAGER, and Other Stories. 30 stories by 30 of the foremost Catholic writers.

A DAUGHTER OF KINGS. By KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON. "The book is most enjoyable."

THE WAY THAT LED BEYOND. By J. HARRISON. "The story does not drag, the plot is well worked out, and the interest endures to the very last page."

CORINNE'S VOW. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. With 16 full-page illustrations. "There is genuine artistic merit in its plot and life-story. It is full of vitality and action."

THE FATAL BEACON. By F. v. BRACKEL. "The story is told well and clearly, and has a certain charm that will be found interesting. The principle characters are simple, good-hearted people, and the heroine's high sense of courage impresses itself upon the reader as the tale proceeds."

THE MONK'S PARDON: An Historical Romance of the Time of Philip IV. of Spain. By RAOUL DE NAVERY. "A story full of stirring incidents and written in a lively, attractive style."

PERE MONNIER'S WARD. By WALTER LECKY. "The characters are life-like and there is a pathos in the checkered life of the heroine. Pere Monnier is a memory that will linger."

TRUE STORY OF MASTER GERARD. By ANNA T. SADLER. "One of the most thoroughly original and delightful romances ever evolved from the pen of a Catholic writer."

THE UNRAVELING OF A TANGLE. By MARION A. TAGGART. With four full-page illustrations. "This story tells of the adventures of a young American girl, who, in order to get possession of a fortune left her by an uncle whom she had never seen, goes to France."

THAT MAN'S DAUGHTER. By HENRY M. ROSS. "A well-told story of American life, the scene laid in Boston, New York and California. It is very interesting."

FABIOLA'S SISTER. (A companion volume to Cardinal Wiseman's "Fabiola.") Adapted by A. C. CLARKE. "A book to read—a worthy sequel to that masterpiece, 'Fabiola.'"

THE OUTLAW OF CAMARGUE: A Novel. By A. DE LA-MORNE. "A capital novel with plenty of go in it."

12 Copyrighted Novels by the Best Authors

Special Net Price, \$12.00

\$1.00 down, \$1.00 a month

Read explanation of our Circulating Library plan on first page.

LIBRARY OF NOVELS No. III

"NOT A JUDGMENT." By GRACE KEON. "Beyond doubt the best Catholic novel of the year."

THE RED INN OF ST. LYPHAR. By ANNA T. SADLIER. "A story of stirring times in France, when the sturdy Vendéans rose in defence of country and religion."

HER FATHER'S DAUGHTER. By KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON. "So dramatic and so intensely interesting that the reader will find it difficult to tear himself away from the story."

OUT OF BONDAGE. By M. HOLT. "Once his book becomes known it will be read by a great many."

MARCELLA GRACE. By ROSA MULHOLLAND. Mr. Gladstone called this novel *a masterpiece*.

THE CIRCUS-RIDER'S DAUGHTER. By F. v. BRACKEL. This work has achieved a remarkable success for a Catholic novel, for in less than a year three editions were printed.

CARROLL DARE. By MARY T. WAGGAMAN. Illustrated. "A thrilling story, with the dash of horses and the clash of swords on every side."

DION AND THE SIBYLS. By MILES KEON. "Dion is as brilliantly, as accurately and as elegantly classical, as scholarly in style and diction, as fascinating in plot and as vivid in action as Ben Hur."

HER BLIND FOLLY. By H. M. ROSS. A clever story with an interesting and well-managed plot and many striking situations.

MISS ERIN. By M. E. FRANCIS. "A captivating tale of Irish life, redolent of genuine Celtic wit, love and pathos."

MR. BILLY BUTTONS. By WALTER LECKY. "The figures who move in rugged grandeur through these pages are as fresh and unspoiled in their way as the good folk of Drumtochty."

CONNOR D'ARCY'S STRUGGLES. By MRS. W. M. BERTHOLDS. "A story of which the spirit is so fine and the Catholic characters so nobly conceived."

Continuation Library

YOU SUBSCRIBE FOR FOUR NEW
NOVELS A YEAR, TO BE MAILED
TO YOU AS PUBLISHED, AND
RECEIVE BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE
————— FREE. —————

Each year we publish *four new novels* by the best Catholic authors. These novels are interesting beyond the ordinary—not religious, but Catholic in tone and feeling. They are issued in the best modern style.

We ask you to give us a *standing order* for these novels. The price is \$1.25, which will be charged as each volume is issued, and the volume sent postage paid.

As a special inducement for giving us a standing order for the novels, we shall include free a subscription to *Benziger's Magazine*. *Benziger's Magazine* is recognized as the best and handsomest Catholic periodical published, and we are sure will be welcomed in every library. The regular price of the Magazine is \$2.00 a year.

Thus for \$5.00 a year—paid \$1.25 at a time—you will get four good books and receive in addition a year's subscription to *Benziger's Magazine*. The Magazine will be continued from year to year, as long as the standing order for the novels is in force, which will be till countermanded.

THE FAMOUS ROUND TABLE SERIES

4 VOLUMES, \$6.00

50 Cents Down; 50 Cents a Month

On payment of 50 cents you get the books and a free subscription to Benziger's Magazine

The Greatest Stories by the Foremost Catholic Writers in the World

With Portraits of the Authors, Sketches of their Lives, and a List of their Works. *Four exquisite volumes*, containing the masterpieces of 36 of the foremost writers of AMERICA, ENGLAND, IRELAND, GERMANY, AND FRANCE. Each story complete. Open any volume at random and you will find a great story to entertain you.

— SPECIAL OFFER —

In order to place this fine collection of stories in every home, we make the following special offer: *Send us 50 cents* and the four fine volumes will be sent to you immediately. Then you pay 50 cents each month until \$6.00 has been paid.

LIBRARY OF SHORT STORIES

BY A BRILLIANT ARRAY OF CATHOLIC AUTHORS

ORIGINAL STORIES BY 88 WRITERS

Four handsome volumes and Benziger's Magazine for a year at the Special Price of \$5.00

50 Cents Down; 50 Cents a Month

You get the books at once, and have the use of them while making easy payments. Send us only 50 cents, and we will forward the books at once; 50 cents entitles you to immediate possession. No further payment need be made for a month; afterwards you pay 50 cents a month.

STORIES BY

Anna T. Sadlier
Mary E. Mannix
Mary T. Waggaman
Jerome Hart
Mary G. Bonesteel
Magdalen Rock
Eugenie Uhlrich
Alice Richardson
Katharine Jenkins
Mary Boyle O'Reilly
Clara Mulholland
Grace Keon
Louise Emily Dobrée
Theo. Gift
Margaret E. Jordan
Agnes M. Rowe
Julia C. Walsh

Madge Mannix
Leigh Gordon Giltner
Eleanor C. Donnelly
Teresa Stanton
H. J. Carroll
Rev. T. J. Livingstone, S.J.
Marion Ames Taggart
Maurice Francis Egan
Mary F. Nixon-Roulet
Mrs. Francis Chadwick
Catherine L. Meagher
Anna Blanche McGill
Mary Catherine Crowley
Katharine Tynan Hinkson
Sallie Margaret O'Malley
Emma Howard Wight

900 PAGES

500 ILLUSTRATIONS

A GREAT OFFER!

THE LIFE OF OUR LORD

— AND —

SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

And of His Virgin Mother Mary

FROM THE ORIGINAL OF

L. C. BUSINGER, LL.D.

BY

Rev. RICHARD BRENNAN, LL.D.

Quarto, half morocco, full gilt side, gilt edges,
900 pages, 500 illustrations in the text
and 32 full-page illustrations by

M. FEUERSTEIN

PRICE NET \$10.00

EASY PAYMENT PLAN,

\$1.00 DOWN, \$1.00 A MONTH

Mail \$1.00 to-day and the book will be shipped
to you immediately. Then you pay \$1.00
a month till \$10.00 is paid.

This is not only a Life of Christ and of His
Blessed Mother, but also a carefully condensed
history of God's Church from Adam to the end
of the world in type, prophecy, and fulfilment, it
contains a popular dogmatic theology and a real
catechism of perseverance, filled with spiritual
food for the soul.

The Best Stories and Articles. Over 1000 Illustrations a Year.

BENZIGER'S MAGAZINE

The Popular Catholic Family Monthly

*Recommended by 70 Archbishops and Bishops of the
United States*

SUBSCRIPTION, \$2.00 A YEAR

What Benziger's Magazine gives its Readers:

Fifty complete stories by the best writers—equal to a book of 300 pages selling at \$1.25.

Three complete novels of absorbing interest—equal to three books selling at \$1.25 each.

Over 1000 beautiful illustrations.

Twenty-five large reproductions of celebrated paintings.

Twenty articles—equal to a book of 150 pages—on travel and adventure; on the manners, customs and home-life of peoples; on the haunts and habits of animal life, etc.

Twenty articles—equal to a book of 150 pages—on our country: historic events, times, places, important industries.

Twenty articles—equal to a book of 150 pages—on the fine arts: celebrated artists and their paintings, sculpture, music, etc., and nature studies.

Twelve pages of games and amusements for in and out of doors.

Fifty pages of fashions, fads and fancies, gathered at home and abroad, helpful hints for home workers, household column, cooking receipts, etc.

"Current Events," the important happenings over the whole world, described with pen and pictures.

Twelve prize competitions, in which valuable prizes are offered.

*This is what is given in a single year of
Benziger's Magazine.*

Send \$2.00 now and become a subscriber to the best and handsomest Catholic Magazine published.

BENZIGER BROTHERS

NEW YORK:
36-38 Barclay St.

CINCINNATI:
348 Main St.

CHICAGO:
211-213 Madison St.

MN-0708.1

